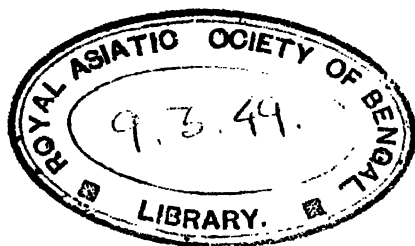


DANTE PAPERS
VIRĀF, ADAMNAN, AND DANTE
AND
OTHER PAPERS

BY

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DEDICATED

TO

The Cama Brothers

MESSRS. MERWANJI AND HORMUSJI MANCHERJI CAMA,

AS

**AN HUMBLE TOKEN OF RECOGNITION OF
THEIR GOOD SERVICES TO THE PARSEE
COMMUNITY.**

PREFACE.

In this volume, I publish my following eight papers.

1. An Irânian Precursor of Dante and an Irish precursor of Dante.
2. An Irânian Precursor of Dante.
3. Zoroastrianism in Dante.
4. The Azi Dahâka of the Avesta and the Satan of Dante.
5. Zoroastrianism. Its Puritanic Influence on the Old World.
6. The Principles of Reform, as taught by Zoroaster.
7. Angelology. A few Traits common to Zoroastrianism, Hebrewism and Christianity.
8. The Preservation, among the Ancient Egyptians and Iranians, of parts of the Body for the purpose of Resurrection.

The first four papers form, as it were, one set. They refer to the three great visionaries—Ardâi Virâf of Irân, St. Adamnan of Ireland, and Dante of Italy. The second four form a set of papers on some cognate Zoroastrian subjects.

The first paper was read before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. The second was written in 1910 for the Dante Society of London, at the request of its Secretary. The subject was first handled by me in a paper before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society¹ about 22 years ago. I am thankful to Right Rev. Dr. L. C. Casartelli Bishop of Salford for his kind appreciative reference² to it in his interesting paper, entitled, "The

1 It was read on 19th August 1911. It is published in the Journal of the Society, Vol. XXIII, No. LXVI pp. 189—216.

2 Journal of the B. B. R. A. Society, Vol. XVIII pp. 192-205. Vide my "Asiatic Papers" pp. 31-44.

3 Referring to his "interesting task of collecting the points of resemblance and analogy" in the works of Dante and Viraf, Dr. Casartelli says: "In this task I shall largely follow the suggestive essay of the distinguished Parsee scholar, Ervad Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, read before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1892".

Persian Dante", which he has written for the Dastur Hoshang Memorial Volume, and of which he has kindly sent me an advanced proof copy. The third paper was contributed to the columns of the Indian Review of Madras.¹ The fourth paper was read on 8th November 1913, before the Jarthoshti Din-ni khol karnâri Mandli (The Society for inquiring into Zoroastrian Studies). The fifth paper was read at the first Convention of Religions, held in Calcutta in 1910. The sixth formed the subject of a Public Lecture, delivered before "The Parsee Zoroastrian Students' Institute," on the premises of the Fort and Proprietary High School of Bombay, on 13th January 1913. The seventh paper was read at the second Convention of Religions held at Allahabad from 9th to 11th January 1911. The eighth was submitted to be read at a meeting of the Manchester Oriental Society.² Some of these papers have been retouched and revised before publication here.

In the Dedication of this Volume, I have taken liberty with the names of two brothers of my community, Messrs. Merwanji and Hormusji Muncherji Cama, who often do good work in the community and outside, more by stealth than openly. With Mr. Merwanji Muncherji Cama, the elder of the two, who had been, for 10 years, a Trustee of the Funds and Properties of the Parsee Panchayet, I have come into more personal contact as the Secretary of the Institution. So, I know him more intimately, and appreciate more admiringly his work as a good thinker and as a hardworking and useful member of the community. He has been steadily and silently doing more solid work for the good of the community than people know of. He is one of the few, who can be termed the "assests of the community."

MITHI LODGE, COLABA, } JIVANJI JAMSHEDJI MODI.
Bombay, 26th July 1914.

1 The Coronation Number of the Indian Review, vol. (1911), No. 11 & 12.

2. March 1914.

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AN IRANIAN PRECURSOR OF DANTE AND AN IRISH PRECURSOR OF DANTE.

The stories of the visits of the other world by pious persons in a dream, in a state of trance or ecstasy, or otherwise, have been many, and they are found among many nations and in many countries. I had the pleasure of reading a paper before this Society, on 26th February 1892, entitled "The Divine Comedy of Dante and the Virâf-nâmeh of Ardâi Virâf,"¹ wherein, I have referred to two such stories, and have compared, at some length, the versions of the visions of Dante of Italy and Ardâi Virâf of Irân.

Last year, I had the pleasure of writing a similar but more amplified paper, entitled "An Irânian Precursor of Dante" for the Dante Society, at the request of its Secretary, to whom my name was kindly submitted for a paper or lecture, by Countess Martinengo Cesaresco. I had the pleasure of reviewing, in the *East and West* of July 1909, at the request of its Editor, that lady's interesting book, "The Place of Animals in Human Thought," wherein she has referred to the Italian and Irânian visionaries.² The review brought

¹ Journal B. B. R. A. Society, Vol. XVIII, pp. 192—205; *vide* my "Asiatic Papers," pp. 31-44.

² "Like the vision of the Seer of Patmos (Dante) this work (the Book of Ardâi Virâf) is purely religious; it attempts no criticism of life and man such as that embodied in the "Divina Commedia," but in spite of this difference in aim, there is an astonishing resemblance between its general plan and that of the poem of Dante. Without going into this subject, I may say that I cannot feel convinced that with the geographical, astronomical, and other knowledge of the East which is believed to have reached Dante by means of conversations with merchants, pilgrims and perhaps craftsmen (for, that Italian artists worked in India at an early date, the Madonna-like groups in many a remote Hindu temple bear almost certain testimony), there did not come to him also some report of the travels of the Persian visitant to the next world." (The Place of Animals in Human Thought" by Countess Evelyn Martinengo Cesaresco, p. 160.)

about some correspondence, wherein I drew her attention to, and sent her a copy of, my above paper before our Society. That led to her drawing the attention of the Dante Society to my paper and to the invitation above referred to, to write a paper for the Dante Society. In that paper, though I have said many things that have already been said by me in my first paper before this Society, I have added a good deal more, as the result of my studying "the subject anew with some further materials on Dante that have freshly come to light or that had not been used by me before."

The subject of this paper was suggested to me while studying further for that paper. It was suggested to me by an interesting book by Mr. C. S. Boswell, entitled "An Irish Precursor of Dante," recently published, and received in the library of our Society last year.

In this book, the author has given an account of an Irish seer, Adamnân, and the translation of the Irish book "Fis Adamnân," which embodies the version of his vision of the next world. Two versions of the Fis Adamnân exist in two old manuscripts in the library of the Royal Irish Academy. One was copied from an older copy not in existence now, in about 1103, and the other was written at the end of the 14th century. Dr. Whitley Stokes, who was in India from 1862 to 1882, and was the legal member of the Supreme Council from 1877—1882, had edited and translated the Irish book, but had printed only 50 copies for private circulation in Simla in 1870. This copy is not to be found, either in our library or in that of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

The attention of students among the general public has been drawn to this Irish vision, only three years ago, by the publication of Mr. Boswell's book on the subject. The learned author gives therein a lucid and interesting account of the various heads of traditions, under which can be grouped, the "several widely divergent lines," along which

the legend of the vision of the next world, which forms the ground plan of the vision of Adamnân, may be traced. One of the heads of traditions is the Eastern or Oriental tradition. While tracing this tradition from its origin in the times of the earlier Accadians and Assyrians, he speaks of the Iranian tradition, as noted in the Avesta and other books. There, he refers to the Vara¹, the happy region founded by the Iranian Yima, the Yama of the Vedas, and says of its denizens that their "life was one of perpetual mirth and gladness, exempt from heat and cold, sickness, old age and death; and there (was) no humpbacked, none bulged forward, there; no impotent, no lunatic; no one malicious, no liar; no one spiteful, none jealous; no one with decayed tooth, no leprous to be pent up, nor any of the brands wherewith Angra Maienya stamps the bodies of mortals."² Mr. Boswell then adds: "It is impossible not to be struck with the resemblance which this passage bears to chapter 35 of the Fis Adamnân. This passage of the Irish book may be given here for comparison. It runs thus:

"This, then, is the manner of that City: A Kingdom without pride, or vanity, or falsehood, or outrage, or deceit, or pretence, or blushing, or shame, or reproach, or insult, or envy, or arrogance, or pestilence, or disease, or poverty, or nakedness, or death, or extinction, or hail, or snow, or wind, or rain, or din, or thunder, or darkness, or cold—a noble, admirable, ethereal realm, endowed with the wisdom,³ and radiance, and fragrance of a plenteous land, wherein is the enjoyment of every excellence."⁴

Having made the above observation on the similarity of the above passages, Mr. Boswell says thus:—

¹ Vendidad, II. 29, 37.

² Boswell's "Irish Precursor of Dante," p. 73. I may say here, that while reading the passage in Mr. Boswell's book, before reading his above quotation and observation, which occur later on, I was at once struck with its similarity to the Vendidad passage which was very familiar to me.

³ Or fruitfulness. ⁴ "The Irish Precursor of Dante" by Boswell, p. 47.

"This resemblance must be purely accidental, but it is none the less worthy to be noted ; for there is reason to suspect that a careful record of the similitudes and coincidences which so frequently occur where imitation or direct derivation is impossible, might tend to discourage the arbitrary assumption that derivation must needs exist, in cases where it may be possible, but is not proved."¹

The object of this paper is to present as desired, by Mr. Boswell, a record of the similitudes which exist between, not the Avesta and the Irish book, but the Irish vision of Adamnán and the Iránian vision of Ardâi Virâf. I find that Mr. Boswell has not referred at all to the Virâf-nâme. His attention does not seem to have been called to this Pahlavi book, which has been translated into English. Had he known the book, perhaps he would have drawn some resemblances. To make my paper a little complete in itself, I not only give the points of similarity between the two visions, but go also into the subjects of the visionaries and the origin of the visions.

Mr. Boswell himself has given some points of resemblance between the Avestan eschatology and the eschatology of St. Adamnán's vision, which is, more or less, the eschatology of the Hebrews and of the early Christians. To speak more generally, he gives a comparison between, what he calls, the ecclesiastical tradition and the Iránian tradition as found in the Avesta and other books. So I will not refer here, at any length, to that comparison of points of resemblance, but, before coming to the immediate subject of my paper,—*viz.*, the points of resemblance between Adamnán and Ardâi Virâf—simply give a list of these points.

(a) The association of the idea of the Tree of Life²

¹ Ibid, p. 74.

² Haoma, Yasna, IX—XI; Bundeshesh XVIII, 1-2, XXVII, 4; Zadsparam VIII 5, XXXVII, 100.

with a mystical bird. The Christian legend and Adamnân's vision refer to it. It is the bird Karsipta.¹

(b) The world-sea. In the Avesta, it is the sea Vôurn-Kasha, which physically or terrestrially can be identified with the Caspian.

(c) The temporary provision for the souls of mingled characters, *i.e.*, who are neither good nor bad. Those are the inmates of the Irânian Hamastgân.

(d) The idea of a guardian angel attending the soul of a dead person. Mr. Boswell thinks this to be the Fravashi, or Farohar of Zoroastrianism. But, I think, he is the same as the angel Sraosha.

Coming to the subject proper of the paper, the subject can be divided into four heads :—

I.—An account of the Irânian visionary, his book of vision, and his vision.

II.—An account of the Irish visionary, his book of vision, and his vision.

III.—A few points of resemblance between the Irânian and Irish versions.

IV.—An enquiry into the origin and the materials of the versions.

As to the first part of the subject, *viz.*, "An account of the Irânian visionary, his book of vision, and his vision," it has been treated very superficially by me in my first paper before this Society, and more fully in my paper sent to the Dante Society. To make this paper complete in itself, and in order to enable my readers to have the whole subject before them for comparison, I will give here this first part as I have given it in my paper before the Dante Society.

¹ Vendidad II 42. In the Pahlavi commentary, it is also called chehâr-ravâki, *i.e.*, a quadruped. *Vide* also the Pahlavi Visparad I, 1; Bundehehsh XIX 16; XXIV 11. Darmesteter in his "Ormuzd et Ahriman" (p. 157), considers the subject to be a meteorological allusion.

I.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE IRANIAN VISIONARY, HIS BOOK
OF THE VISION, AND HIS VISION.

I will treat this subject under four heads—

- (a) Virâf, the Irânian visionary.
- (b) Virâf-nâmeḥ, the Book of the Irânian vision.
- (c) The circumstances of the times of Virâf.
- (d) An account of the vision.

A.—*Virâf, the Irânian Visionary.*

Nothing is known of the life of the Irânian Divine with whose name the book is connected. It is not even possible to fix exactly the age when he flourished. The later Pazend version of the Pahlavi Virâf-Nâmeḥ makes him a contemporary of King Vishtâsp¹, and places his vision after the death of Zoroaster in that monarch's reign. The still later Persian version of the book makes him a contemporary of Ardeshir Babegân², the founder of the Sassanian Empire. The Pahlavî work itself (Chap. I, 16) places his time after that of Alexander the Great, and even after that of Dastur Âdarbad Mârespand, the Irânian Savanarola, who lived in the reign of Shâpur II (A.D. 309-379), and who took an active part in bringing about the Irânian Renaissance.

In the Dibâcheh-i-Âfringân³, Virâf's name is recited as that of a great departed worthy of Irân. He is there spoken of as Ardâi Virâf Ardâ Farôsh. Following the analogy of a number of other names, therein recited, Ardâ Farôsh may,

¹ Pazend text by Ervad E. K. Antia, p. 358, ll. 8-10.

² The Revelations of Arda Virâf by J. A. Pope, pp. 1-3. Ardâ-Virâf-Nâmeḥ by Dastur Kaikhusru, Persian version, p. 1, l. 3; p. 2, l. 26. The Ardâ-Virâf-Nâmeḥ or The Revelations of Arda-Virâf, the Persian Saint, by Geo. Maddox, pp. 1-3.

³ Spiegel's Avesta, translated by Bleeker, Vol. III. Khordah-Avesta. XLVIII, p. 172.

at first sight, seem to be the name of his father. But, in this case, it seems to be simply an appellation like that, which we find after several names, like those of Jâmâsp and Agrerath. "Ardâ Farosh" may be taken in the sense of "the Holy Farohar or Holy Spirit." That appellation seems to have been applied to him for his having performed the task, which forms the subject of our paper, *viz.*, that of going to the other world in his lifetime as a holy spirit and of describing the vision of that world.

The Âfrin-i-Itapithavin enumerates some of the worthies of ancient Irân, especially those who took an active part in the spread of the Zoroastrian religion, and in bringing about its renaissance after the blow that it had received at the hands of Alexander. The list of this Âfrin closes with that of Khusro Kobâd (Chosroes I), popularly known as Noshirwân Adal or Noshirwân the Just. As Ârdai Virâf's name does not occur in the list of this Âfrin, we are led to think that he lived at some time in, or after, the reign of Chosroes I (531-579 A. D.), in whose time, or shortly after whose time, the Âfrin must have been written. So, the most probable date when Virâf lived was the latter half of the sixth century after Christ.

The Virâf-Nâmeh (Chap. I, 35) says that Ardâi Virâf was called Nishâpurian by some. We know of a commentator on the Avesta, known as Nishâhpur (Pahlavi Vendidad V, 34¹: VIII, 22). He is also referred to in the Pahlavi Nirangistân. This commentator Nishâhpur was a councillor of the court of King Noshirwan (Epistles of Mânushcheher I, Ch. IV, 17. "Nâmakihâ-i Mânûshehîhar," edited by Ervad B. N. Dhabar, p. 24, l. 1.). So, if we take Virâf,

¹ Spiegel's Pahlavi Vendidad, p. 59, l. 2. He is also referred to in the Pahlavi Mâdigân-i Hâzâr Dâdistân. *Vide* the Photo-Zinco fac-simile text edited by me, pp. 14 and 34. *Vide* my Introduction to "The Social Code of the Parsees in Sassanian Times," p. XII. He is named 7 times in the Pahlavi Vendidad, four times in the Vendidad commentary, and 18 times in the Nirangistân.

whose another name was Nishâpurian, to be the councillor who assisted Noshirwân in his fight against Mazdak, his age was that of the sixth century after Christ.

B.—Virâf-nâmeḥ, the book of the Irânian vision.

Ardâi Virâf-nâmeḥ, or the book of (the vision of) Ardâi Virâf, is the name of a Pahlavi book which describes the vision. It belongs to the second of the three classes into which the late Dr. West¹ has divided the extant Pahlavi literature, *viz.*, "The Texts on Religious Subjects."

We are not in a position to fix exactly the date at which this Pahlavi Virâf-nâmeḥ was written, but it is probable that it was written in the last days of the Sassanian Empire, at some time after the reign of Chosroes I, more generally known as Noshirwân the Just.

The text of this Pahlavi book was published for the first time with an English translation in 1872². A French translation³ from the original Pahlavi was published in 1887. Another edition of the text with a Gujarati translation has been published in 1908⁴. The Pahlavi text has been latterly rendered into Pazend⁵ and then into Persian⁶.

¹ "Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie," Pahlavi Literature.

² The Book of Arda-Virâf. The Pahlavi text prepared by Dastur Hoshangji Jamaspji Asa, revised and collated with further MSS. with an English Translation and Introduction, by Martin Haug, Ph. D., assisted by E. W. West, Ph. D.

³ Arta-Virâf-Namak ou Livre d'Ardâ-Viraf, traduction, par M.A., Barthélemy.

⁴ Arta-Virâf-Namak. The original Pahlavi text, with an introduction, notes. Gujarati translation and Persian version of Zarthosht Behram in verse, by Dastur Kaikhusru Dastur Jamaspji Jamasp Asa.

⁵ *Vide* the Pazend texts, collected and collated by Errad Êdalji Kersaspji Antia, and published by the Trustees of the Parsee Punchayet (1909), pp. 358-380.

⁶ *Vide* Arda-Virâf-Nameh, by Dastur Kaikhusru Dastur Jamaspji Jamasp Asa (1902). Persian version, pp. 1-37.

The attention of learned Europe was drawn to this Iranian vision by the English rendering of this Persian version by J. A. Pope in 1816. As Dr. Haug said, it "then excited considerable interest" in Europe¹.

C.—The circumstances of the Times of Virâf.

As to the circumstances, under which Virâf saw and described his vision, we gather the following facts from his Virâf-nâmeḥ and from other Pahlavi sources²:—

Alexander the Great, when he overthrew the ancient Achemenian Empire and conquered Persia, destroyed a good deal of the old literature, especially the religious literature of the country. Authorized copies of this literature were kept in the two well-known libraries of the country, the one known as Ganj-i Shapigân and connected with the Royal treasury at Shapigân or Shaspigân at Samarcand³, and the other, known as Daz-i Napisht (lit. the castle of written documents), and connected with the royal palace at Istakhar. The latter is said to have been burned by Alexander in one of his drunken frolics at the investigation of Thaïs, the courtesan; and the contents of the former were carried away by his Greeks⁴. Alexander, at one time, thought of even destroying the whole of the aristocracy of Irân, so that, he could then safely march to India without the least fear of having his rule overthrown by the leaders of Irân, rising in

¹ The Book of Arda-Virâf. Introductory Essays, III, p. LV. In 1904 Mr. George Maddox rendered Mr. Pope's prose translation into prose verse, under the title of "the Ardai-Virâf-Nameh."

(a) Dinkard, Book III. Vide Haug's introduction to the Zend Pahlavi Glossary of Dastur Dr. Hoshangji, pp. XXXI-XXXVIII, and West's Dinkard, S. B. E., Vol. XXXVII., pp. XXX, XXXI, pp. 412-413.

(b) Tansar's letter to the king of Tabristan. Vide Journal Asiatique, Neuvième Série. Tome III (Mars., Avril, Mai, Juin, 1894), p. 516.

² Vide my "Asiatic papers," pp. 152-154; Journal B. B. R. A. S. Vol. XX, pp. 161 et seq.

³ Ebn Khaldoun as quoted by Hadji Khalife. "Relation de l'Égypte," par Abd-al-latîf, traduit par Silvestre de Sacy (1810), p. 241.

revolt. But, he was saved from the guilt of doing this atrocious act by his tutor Aristotle. We find an excellent account of the correspondence that passed between Alexander and Aristotle in this matter in the letter of Tansar or Tosar, the minister and Dastur of Ardashir Babegân to Jasnafshah, the King of Tabaristan. Aristotle thus wrote in reply to his royal pupil :—

“What distinguishes the Persians, is courage, bravery, and prudence in the day of battle—qualities which form the most powerful instruments for sovereignty and success. If you exterminate them, you will destroy from this world, the best pillar of talent, and once the great men have disappeared, thou shalt be unavoidably forced to pass down to villains, the functions and the ranks of the great. Now, bear this in mind, that in this world, there is no evil, plague, revolt and pestilence, the action of which shall be so pernicious as the promotion of villains to the rank of nobles.”

Having thus dissuaded Alexander from putting to death the aristocracy of Irân, he gave him the advice to “divide and rule.” He asked him to divide the Irânian Empire into petty principalities (*Mulak-i-Tawâif*), so that no particular chief can be so powerful as to raise the banner of revolt and to rule over the whole of the Empire.

Thus, the conquest of Irân by Alexander gave a great blow to the religion and literature of the country, and brought ruin and disaster to its aristocracy of wealth and intellect. The *Virâf-nâme* thus takes a note of this event : “Till the completion of 300 years (from the time of Zoroaster), the religion was in purity, and men were without doubts. But, afterwards, the accursed evil spirit, the wicked one, in order to make men doubtful of this religion, instigated the accursed Alexander, the Ruman, who was dwelling in Egypt,

so that he came to the country of Irân with severe cruelty and war and devastation; he also slew the ruler of Irân and destroyed the metropolis and empire, and made them desolate. And this religion, namely, all the Avesta and Zend, written upon prepared cow-skins, and with gold ink, was deposited in the archives in Stakhar Pâpakân¹; and the hostility of the evil destined wicked Ashemok, the evil-doer, brought onward Alexander, the Ruman, who was dwelling in Egypt and he burnt them. And he killed several *dasturs* and judges and *herbads* and *mobads*, and upholders of the religion, and the competent and the wise of the country of Irân. And he cast hatred and strife, one with the other, amongst the nobles and householders of the country of Irân; and self-destroyed, he fled to hell. And after that, there were confusion and consternation among the people of the country of Irân, one with the other. And so they had neither lord, nor ruler, nor chieftain, nor *dastur*, who was acquainted with the religion, and they were doubtful in regard to God : and religions of many kinds and different fashions of belief and scepticism and various codes of law were promulgated in the world.²

This state of affairs of, what may be called, the "Dark Ages" of Irân lasted for a very long time. At last, Ardashir Babegiân, laying the foundation of the Sassanian Empire, brought about the Renaissance in religion and literature. The Renaissance had begun in the last days of the Parthian rule. Valkhash (Vologeses I) may be said to have begun it. But Ardashir laid the foundation of it on a firm ground. While doing so, he tried to bring about the unity of the Church and the State. Shapur I, Shapur II, and Chosroes I continued the work at intervals. This brings us to the time of Ardai Virâf.

¹ The name of Persepolis in Sassanian times; the modern Persian Istakhar.

² Virâf-Nameh Chap. I. 2-11; Dr. Haug's translation of the Virâf-Nameh p. 143.

Coming to the times of Chosroes I (Noshirwan the Just), we find that this monarch had to fight against the tenets of that Irânian socialist Mazdak¹. Thus, Mazdakism also had added to the religious disorder of the times. Countess Cezaresco² seems to suggest, that the Christian sects, which were, after some persecution in 344 A. D., tolerated in Persia, and which latterly received the Moslem invaders with favour, may also be one of the many causes that led to religious scepticism and disorder. It is possible that all these causes may have more or less contributed to the then current state of affairs.

In order to put an end to this state of scepticism and disorder, resulting from a long period of the rule of foreign powers and changing dynasties, and from a long list of various causes, and in order to bring about a state of improvement, a new attempt was now made. A number of religious and god-fearing men met together in the great Fire-temple of Atash-Farobâ. According to the Persian version of the Virâf-nâme, at first, there met a large assembly of 40,000 leading men of all the cities of Irân. They elected a body of 4,000 persons from among themselves. These selected a body of 400, and these again one of 40. This body of 40 then selected a smaller body of 7 from among themselves. According to the Pahlavi Virâf-nâme, after some deliberation, they came to the conclusion, that "some one of them must go to, and bring intelligence direct from, Divine Intelligence." They resolved upon calling a general meeting, of the people to select a properly qualified person for the divine mission. The people met and selected, from among themselves, seven men, who, on account of their great piety, and on account of the purity of their thoughts, words and deeds, were best qualified for divine meditation. These seven then selected from among themselves, the three best, who, again, in their turn, selected, from among themselves, one, by name,

¹ Vide my Paper on "Mazdak, the Iranian Socialist" in the Dastur Hoshang Memorial Volume, pp. 117-131.

² "The Place of Animals in Human Thought," pp 160-161.

Ardâi Virâf, who belonged to the town of Nishâpur. Virâf, before submitting to this selection of himself, wished to ascertain what the sacred divination was about his election. As in the choice of Mathias, as the last apostle, he desired to determine by lot, the sacred divination. He said: "if you like, draw lots for the (other) Mazdayasnâns and myself. If the lot falls to me, I shall go with pleasure, to that abode of the pious and the wicked and I will carry faithfully this message and bring a reply truthfully." The lots were drawn thrice and they fell to Virâf.

D.—An Account of the Vision.

After describing the times and the circumstances which led to the vision, we will now speak of the vision itself.

The lots that were drawn being in favour of Virâf, he prepared for the vision or for the visit to the other world. He retired to a quiet place, washed himself, put on a new clean suit of clothes and said his prayers. He then drank three cups of a sacred somniferous drink in token of "*humata, lukhta and hvarshata*," i.e., good thoughts, good words and good deeds. The somniferous drink and the deep divine meditation soon threw him into an unusually long sleep, which lasted for seven days and nights. The place of his retreat was guarded from interference by several pious men. Virâf rose from this meditative sleep at the end of the seventh day.

He rose, as if, from "a pleasant sleep."¹ All the priests and others who were round about him, were pleased to see him awake, and they all welcomed him "from the city of the dead to the city of the living."² They paid their obeissance and homage and Virâf bowed in return. He then blessed them in the names of Ahura Mazda (God), of the Âmeshâspands (archangels), of Zoroaster, of Sarosh and Âdar, the

¹ Chapter III. 3.

² Ibid III. 6.

two angels that were his guides, and of all the pious spirits of the other world. The assembled priests blessed him in return and requested him to describe his vision.¹ Before doing so, he asked for food and drink. Food, water and wine were immediately brought before him. He said grace and took his meals, which included *myazd*, i.e., consecrated bread and other eatables. Having finished his repast he said grace again, as was, and still is, the Zoroastrian custom. He then sent for a clever writer (*dapir*) and dictated to him an account of his vision.¹

According to his account, on the first night of his seven days' sleep, the angels Sarosh, who is the messenger of God, and Âdar, who presides over fire, came to him, and bowing before him, welcomed him. They took hold of his hand, and, in their company and guidance, he advanced to the Chinvat bridge with three footsteps of *humata*, *hukhta* and *hvarshata*, i.e., of good thoughts, good words and good deeds. This was a bridge which the souls of all the departed ones have to go across. For three nights after death, the souls of all men remain within the precincts of this world, more especially at the places where their corpses lay. The souls of the righteous recite the words which mean "Happiness to him through whom happiness reaches others." On the dawn of the third night, the soul of a righteous man goes over to the other world. It passes through an atmosphere of sweet scent and fragrance.² The whole aggregate of his *Kunashne*, i.e., his deeds done in this world, presents itself before him in the form of a beautiful and virtuous damsel. The righteous soul asks the damsel³ who she was.

¹ Virâf narrates the account in the first person. Here I describe it in a narrative form.

² *Vide my paper, "An untranslated Chapter of the Bundehesh" (Journal, Bombay Branch; Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXI. pp. 49-65. "Vide my" "Asiatic Papers," pp. 217-34.)*

³ According to Dr. Cheyne, who calls this "a very noble allegory," in his work, entitled "The origin of the Psalter," the Mahomedans have

She replies ; “ O young man of good thoughts, goods words and good deeds ! I am (the result of) your good deeds.”

Having seen this state of affairs of the pious and righteous souls that cross the Chinvat bridge to go over to paradise, Virâf himself crossed the bridge, which widens on the approach of righteous souls and straitens itself on the approach of unrighteous souls. He saw, at the bridge, the angel Mithra¹, who judges men's actions in this world. He had with him the angel Rashnu who helped him in his work of judgement with a balance in his hand. The angels Vai (Râm) Vahrâm (Beharâm) and Âstâd who helped Mithra, were also there.

Crossing the bridge, Virâf entered into the other world in the company of his two guides. At first, he was taken to Hamestagân which is the place, where live the souls of those whose meritorious acts and sinful acts in this world are equal. Virâf was told, that, if one's meritorious actions exceeded his wrongful acts even by a small measure, he was sent to Heaven. If the contrary, he was sent to Hell. If both were equal, he was sent to this place till his resurrection. The only punishment here was alternate heat and cold of the atmosphere.

From this stationary place of Hamestagân, Virâf was taken to the first stage of Heaven, with the first step of *humata* or good thoughts. The place of this heaven was a place of the track of the star. A second step of *hukhta*, i.e., good words, took him to the second heaven of the track of moon ; and a third step of *hvarshata*, i.e., good deeds,

taken their idea of the *pari* in the Heaven from that of this damsel among the Iranians. Rev. Dr. Casartelli calls this a “ a Dantesque episode.” (Outre-Tombe, K.R. Cama Memorial Volume, p. 74.)

¹ *Vide* my paper on “ St. Michael of the Christians and Mithra of the Zoroastrians—A comparison ” (Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. VI, pp. 237-254). *Vide* my “ Anthropological Papers”, pp. 173-90 *Vide* my paper on “ The Belief about the Future of the Soul among the ancient Egyptians and Iranians ” (Journal of the Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XX, pp. 217-233). *Vide* my “ Asiatic Papers.”

took him to the third heaven of the track of the sun. A fourth step took him to the fourth heaven of Garotmân, which is the very seat of Ahura Mazda. Here, he was welcomed by all pious persons and made to eat *anôsh*,¹ i.e., immortality. Here, his guide Adar drew his special attention to the fact, that some people carelessly burnt green wood over fire. This was wrong. A tank of water resulting from the green wood was pointed out to him (Chap. X, 11). Then, Vohuman, the second of the seven Archangels, or the first of the six—if Ahura Mazda be excluded from the list—got up from his golden throne and introduced Virâf to Ahura Mazda, who was surrounded by all the archangels and by the holy spirits of pious and religious persons like Zoroaster, King Vishtâsp, Jâmâsp, Frashaostar, Isadvâstar and others. Ahura Mazda welcomed him and directed the guides of Virâf to show him Heaven and Hell.

In his celestial tour in the Paradise, Virâf now and then utters words of praise to the righteous souls (Chap. XII. 5). Virâf saw in Heaven the souls of the following class of righteous persons. The liberal ; those who recited their prayers and were steadfast in their religion ; good rulers ; speakers of truth ; women of good thoughts, good words and good deeds, who were obedient to their husbands ; those who took care and made proper use of water, fire, earth, trees, cattle, sheep and such other good creation of God and who regularly performed religious ceremonies and praised God ; those who performed religious ritual well ; warriors in the cause of good work ; those who killed noxious creatures ; the agriculturers ; good artizans ; shepherds, who attended to and fed their cattle, saved them from the grasp of wolves and looked to their breeding at proper times ; heads of families and villages, who did their

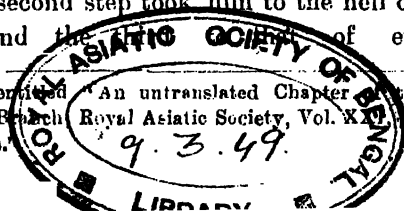
¹ The Hâdôkht Nask, Chap. II, 38, and the Minokherad (Chap. II, 152,) speak of *maidyozaom raogan* i. e. the oil maidyozaom which is given to pious souls as an emblem of immortality. On drinking it, the soul forgets his past life of this world.

respective duties carefully and who carried prosperity to waste land by introducing therein streams, canals and such other water works; and those who spread knowledge and religion and who interceding between fighting parties brought about peace.

Then Virāf was taken to a place where a river was formed of the tears of those who lamented much and wept for their dear departed ones. The souls of these dead ones, for whom much lamentation was made by their living dear ones, found it difficult to cross the river formed of their tears. Those for whom there was not much unreasonable lamentation crossed the river easily. Showing this river of tears, Âdar, one of the two guides, asked Virāf to convey a message to the living world that people should not indulge in unlawful lamentation, which, instead of doing any good, did a good deal of harm to the dead.

Virāf was then taken back to the Chinvat bridge (Chap. XVII). He now saw there the souls of the sinners. During the first three nights after death, the soul of the sinner felt miserable, roved round the place where the corpse lay and uttered words of despair, saying: "Ahura-Mazda! Where shall I go? Where shall I take refuge?" He is overtaken with a cold stinking wind.¹ The aggregate of his sinful actions in this world appears before him in the form of a very ugly woman, who presents herself before him, as the result of his bad life, and taunts him for having failed to do his duty towards his God and for having acted according to the will of Âhriman. The soul of the wicked man then passed on to Hell, where it went with three footsteps. The first step of *dushmata* (evil thought) took him to the first hell of evil thoughts; the second step took him to the hell of evil words (*dushkhta*), and the third step took him to the hell of evil actions

¹ Vide my paper entitled "An untranslated Chapter of the Bundeesh" (Journal, Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXV, p. 49-65). Vide my "Asiatic Papers."



(*duzvarshita*). The fourth step took him to the Hell proper. Virâf's guides took hold of his hand in this place of danger, so that he may be unhurt. It is a place full of cold and heat, drought and stench, darkness and depth. Every soul there feels alone, and a period of three days appears like that of 9,300 years. All noxious creatures, the smallest of which is like a mountain, torment him day and night.

Virâf is now taken through the different parts of hell, wherein he sees the different classes of sinners meeting with their appropriate punishments. At each of these places, Virâf puts a question to his guides about the particular sins the sinful had committed, and they explain the state of affairs. The list of sinners observed by Virâf is too long to be enumerated here in details. But the following list of sins gives an idea of the different classes of sinners: sodomy; murder; adultery; fraud in weights and measures; misrule; slander; avarice; lying; defrauding workmen; disowning one's children; infanticide; perjury; extortion; dishonesty in the acquisition of wealth, in measuring lands, in removing boundary stones, and in agreements and promises.

There are a number of sins which can be considered as such only from a Zoroastrian point of view. They are such as the following:—Non-observance of certain rules of abstinence on the part of women during their menstruation; talking when dining; walking without shoes; pollution of fire or water by throwing hair and such other animal refuse into them; wearing of false hair or painting of faces.

At the end of his visit of Hell, Virâf was taken to the place where lived Ahriman, the great evil spirit himself. Virâf saw, that instead of consoling the sinners who had acted according to his will, he taunted and reprimanded them. He said to the sinners: "You ate the food given to you by God, but served me (instead of serving Him). You did not think of your Creator, but acted according to my will" (Chap. C, 3-4).

Now Virâf was taken to Ahura Mazda for the second time. Ahura Mazda welcomed him and asked him to convey the following message to the world :—

“O Ardâi Virâf ! Say thus to the Mazdayaçnâns of the world : There is only one path (and) it is the path of Righteousness. It is the path of the ancients. All other paths are no paths. Go along that one path which is that of Righteousness. Do not turn away from it, whether in prosperity or in adversity and in any case whatever. Entertain good thoughts, utter good words, practise good actions. Continue in that very religion which Spitamân Zarathusht accepted from me and which Vishtâsp promulgated in the world. Hold fast the law of virtue and abstain from vice. Bear this always in mind, that cattle will be (reduced to) dust, horse will be dust, gold and silver will be dust, the body of man will be dust. He alone will not be (reduced to) dust who will praise righteousness and do the works of righteousness.”

Asking Virâf to convey this beautiful message to the denizens of the world, Ahura Mazda, bid adieu to him saying : “Ardai Virâf ! You are righteous. Prosperity to you.”

II.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE IRISH VISIONARY, HIS BOOK OF VISION, AND HIS VISION.

Now, I will give a brief account (A) of the Irish visionary, (B) of his book, and (C) of his vision, as collected from Mr. Boswell's work.

A.—*An account of Adamnân, the Irish visionary.*

Ir or Eri, a word which can be compared to Avestaic *airya* (in *Airyana Vaeja* or *Irân Vej*) and Sanscrit *arya*, was the ancient name of Ireland, by which name it is said to

be still known to its natives. This old name or radical form can be traced in many of the old names of Ireland, such as Iris, Iernis, Invernish, Hibernia and Eri or Erin, and in the modern names, such as Irland or Ireland. The name Scotia seems to have been applied to the country, in or after the third century. This name came from the Scoti, a people who possessed the island at the time when Christianity was introduced into the country. The original tradition of these Scoti is, that they came from Scythia, situated in the north-east of Central Europe, the country invaded by Darius of Persia. The Saks, Sakas or Sagæ, who are referred to in the ancient Indian literature, whose name formed a part of the name of Sagastan, Sajastan or Siestan, a part of the eastern frontiers of India, and who are connected with the Scythians, are believed by some to have given their names to the ancient Saxons and to the country Saxony.

The Irish Scoti were converted to Christianity in the fifth century after Christ. In this conversion, Saint Patrick, the patron Saint of Ireland, had a principal hand. By the end of the 7th century, Christianity had made a good progress in Ireland, and the Irish Church had a great hand in the spread of culture in Western Europe. It sent abroad missionaries to preach Christianity.

One of the foremost of the clergy of that time was St. Adamnán, the visionary, whose vision of the next world is the subject of comparison in this paper. The constitution of the National Churches of those times being aristocratic, Adamnán, like many leading Churchmen, was a man of high birth, his father being "a man of chiefly rank"¹. He was born at some time between 624 ad 627 A. D. His name Adamnán is a diminutive of Adam². Iona, one of the islands of the Hebrides, which was, at one time, inhabited by the ancient Druids; and then, latterly, christianised by St. Columba in the sixth century, was, at this time, a seat of great

¹ "An Irish Precursor of Dante" by Boswell, p. 7.

² Ibid.

learning. It had a great monastery. Adamnân had his education at this monastery, and, latterly, he became its abbot in 679 A. D. Not only did he show himself to be a great administrator of ecclesiastical establishments, but, like many other saints of Ireland, took an active part in public events."¹

In the year 684, King Ecgfrid of Northumbria had invaded Ireland and carried a number of captives. Adamnân, taking advantage of his acquaintance with Ecgfrid's son, Aldfrid, who had at one time visited Iona and had met Adamnân there, brought about the release of his countrymen when Aldfrid came to the throne of Northumbria. He subsequently visited Northumbria, and having made there the acquaintance of the venerable Bede, at his instance, turned his attention to two points, in which "the Irish usage differed from that of Rome: *i.e.*, (a) the form of the tonsure,² which, in Ireland, was made crescent-wise across the head, (b) and the time of keeping Easter."³ He succeeded in introducing reforms in these two matters in Ireland, but failed in doing so in his own monastery at Iona, where "his monks refused to admit any innovation upon the national practice."⁴ He died in 704. He was at first buried in Iona, but his relics were carried to Ireland in 727. They were then reconveyed to his monastery in Iona in 730.

He was the author of several works, and some later annals attribute various miracles to him. One of the miracles refers to his services to bring about the emancipation of women, who, in those times, were like men "obliged to render military service."⁵ After several "incredible austerities,"⁶ forced upon him by his mother who espoused the cause of

¹ Ibid, p. 8.

² The ceremony of cutting off a part of the hair of the head with prayers and benedictions by the bishop in the first degree of the clerical.

³ Mr. Boswell's *Irish Precursor of Dante*, p. 9.

⁴ Ibid, p. 10.

⁵ Ibid, p. 20.

⁶ Ibid.

womenkind in this matter, he got women exempted from military service.

B.—Adamnán's Work.

Now coming to the book of his vision, known as "*Fis Adamnáin*", we find the following facts:—

"The vision, which has come down to us under the name of Adamnán, is not to be included among his own works"¹. It is attributed to the 10th or 11th century, *i.e.*, to a period about two or three hundred years after his time. The work "never professes to be Adamnán's own composition. It invariably speaks of him in the third person..... The work may be, what it professes to be, and may have for its basis a more or less accurate tradition of Adamnán's own teaching."²

The book is "a vision recited by the saint, which a later writer has worked up into literary form, while other details relating to the same subject, but entirely irrelevant, have been added later."

C.—A brief account of the version of the Irish vision.

1. The book³ opens with the praise of God who rewards the righteous by calling them to Heaven and consigns the unrighteous to Hell.

2. To the Saints, the righteous, the apostles and the disciples of Christ, the secrets and the mysteries of the Heavenly Kingdom are revealed. Such was the case with apostles Peter and Paul on special occasions, and with all the apostles on the day of Mary's death. Adamnán was the latest instance of the kind. To him were revealed the things of the other world.

¹ Ibid, p. 25. ² Ibid, pp. 25, 26.

³ The marginal figures refer to the paræ of the version, as given by Mr. Boswell.

3. "His soul departed from out his body on the feast of John Baptist and was conveyed to the celestial realm,.....and to Hell.....There appeared to it (the soul), the angel that had been its guardian while in the flesh, and bore it away with him to view, firstly, the Kingdom of Heaven."¹

4. In the Kingdom of Heaven, the first land is the Land of Saints—a bright land of fair weather. The Saints of the Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern world have their separate companies in the East, West, North and South of the Land of Saints. There are nine classes of Heaven in the Kingdom of Heaven, varying according to the rank and order of the Saints.

5. The Saints keep singing, hear music, and contemplate the radiance which they see. They are face to face with the Lord who is in the South-east with a crystal veil between them. They discern the form of the people of Heaven through a golden portico in the South. No veil separates them from the Host of Heaven and the Host of the Saints. A circle of fire surrounds their place, but they pass in and out through it unscathed.

6. The Twelve Apostles, Virgin Mary, the Patriarchs and Prophets, the holy Virgins, all form separate bands. Bands of angels and guardians of the souls do perpetual service there in the Royal presence. This will continue until the Day of Judgment.

7—11. The splendour of the throne of the Lord is even greater. Over the head of the Lord—the Glorious One—there is "a great arch: and the eye which should behold it would forthwith melt away." The mighty Lord himself is indescribable. He is a fiery mass burning on for ever. The city, wherein His throne is set, is surrounded by seven

¹ Ibid, p. 29.

crystal walls. The floor also is of crystal, with the sun's countenance upon it.

12—13. Gentle folk "most mild, most kindly and lacking in no goodly quality" dwell within this city of the throne of the Lord. "Seven thousand angels, as it were great candles, shine and illumine that city," spreading sweet savour all round.

14. Those who have been not found fit to enter into this city "find a restless and unstable habitation, until the coming of Judgment," outside it on heights and in marshy places.

15. This city of the Lord has six guarded doors, each guarded by a warder of the Heavenly Host. At the first door, approaching the city from this world, sits the Archangel Michael and "two youths, with iron rods in their laps," who "smite the sinners as they pass through this the first grief."

16—18. While passing through most of the gates, the souls of the righteous pass easily, but those of the sinners suffer pain and torment.

19—20. On passing the last gate, the pure and the righteous souls are welcomed by the Lord, and the unrighteous are ordered to be delivered over to Lucifer. The wicked soul thereupon utters "a groan heavier than any groan." The angels, who had guided him so far, leave him now.

21. Adamnán's spirit is now taken by his guardian angel to the nethermost Hell. The first region in Hell consists of land, burnt black, but with no punishment therein. A fiery glen is on the other side of it.

22. "An enormous-bridge spans the glen..... Three companies seek to pass over it, but not all succeed. One company find the bridge to be of ample width, from beginning to end, until they win across the fiery glen, safe

and sound, fearless and undismayed. The second company, when entering upon it, find it narrow at first, but broad afterwards, until they, in like manner, fare across that same glen, after great peril. But for the last company the bridge is broad at first, but straight and narrow thereafter, until they fall from the midst of it into that same perilous glen, into the throats of those eight red-hot serpents, that have their dwelling place in the glen."

23. These three companies of souls are of the three classes of persons (*a*) who were chaste and penitent from the very beginning, (*b*) who were not so at first, but who had afterwards become so, and (*c*) who were sinners who listened to God's precepts but did not act up to them.

24. Furthermore, there were vast multitudes "upon the shore of perpetual pain, in the land of utter darkness." Their pain ebbed and returned again in turns. "These are they in whom good and evil were equally balanced, and on the Day of Doom, judgment shall be passed between them, and their good shall quench their evil on that day."

25. There is another company of sinners, who had most to do with the Church. Their torments are monstrous. "They are fettered to fiery columns, a sea of fire about them up to their chins....."

26. There is another band of sinners, who, among other punishments, suffer that of being alternately submitted to heat and cold,

27—30. There are various other sinners who suffer a variety of torments.

31. After a visit to this dark region of Hell, the spirit of Adamnân is taken back to the Land of Saints. There, an angel's voice edjoined him "to return again into that body whence he had departed, and to rehearse in courts and assemblies, and in the great congregations of laymen and of clerics, the rewards of Heaven and the pains of Hell."

32. Adamnān taught this doctrine (that is all that he saw in Heaven and Hell) to his congregations.

33. That doctrine is taught continually to the souls of the righteous who go to the teacher (Elias) in the "form of bright white birds."

34. The woes of Hell are such, that even Saints moan on knowing them. "How much more fitting were it for the men that are yet on earth to ponder.....upon the pains of Hell."

35. "This, then, is the manner of that City: A Kingdom without pride, or vanity, or falsehood, or outrage, or deceit, or pretence, or blushing, or shame, or reproach, or insult, or envy, or arrogance, or pestilence, or disease, or poverty, or nakedness, or death, or extinction, or hail, or snow, or wind, or rain, or din, or thunder, or darkness, or cold,—a noble, admirable, ethereal realm, endowed with the wisdom, and radiance, and fragrance of a plenteous land, wherein is the enjoyment of every excellence."

III.

A FEW POINTS OF STRIKING RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THE IRANIAN AND IRISH VISIONS.

Coming to the points of similarity in their visions, we will speak of these under the following heads:—

Points of similarity between—

- A. The Visionaries.
- B. Their Books or Versions.
- C. The Method or the Ways of their Visions.
- D. Details of the Visions themselves.

A.—Similarity between the Visionaries.

Both the visionaries—the Iranian and the Irish—were priests of very high standing and both had arisen to the rank

of saints. Adamnân is put into the rank of the saints and the righteous in the *Fis Adamnân*. Ardai Virâf's name is commemorated in the list of the ancient worthies of Irân in the *Dibâcheh-i Âfringân*. The proper name itself is Viraf, and Ardâ (artâ) is another form of Asha or Asho. *i.e.*, holy or saintly.

2. Both had to come into contact with the general assemblies of the learned divines of their country, in connection with their religious functions. Adamnân had promulgated his "Canons" and his code of laws (*Câin Adamnân*) before "a Môrdail—Great Assembly—the Diet or States-General of Ireland."¹ Virâf also had to present himself before the Anjuman² of the learned to consider the question of improving the state of religious affairs of his country.

3. Again, on coming to life or on resuming their bodies again, both communicated their visions to large assemblies. Adamnân was asked to do so "in courts and assemblies, and in the great congregations of laymen and of clerics."³ He preached what he saw before the great assemblies of the men of Éire.⁴ Virâf communicated his vision to the assembled Dasturs (*din dastubardân*) and Mazdayasnâns.⁵

B.—Similarity in their versions or books.

4. The books that have come down to us, as the versions of their visions, are not their own works, but are the works of some later writers. In the case of Adamnân, his version, as noted in the *Fis Adamnân*, is believed to have been written about two or three hundred years after him. In the case of Virâf, his version, as noted in the *Pahlavi Virâf-nâme*, is also written by

¹ Boswell, p. 18.

² *Viraf-nâme*, Chap. I, 14.

³ *Fis Adamnân*, 31, Boswell, p. 44.

⁴ *Fis Adamnân*, 32, Boswell, p. 44.

⁵ *Viraf-nâme*, Chap. III, 4.

somebody else. But there is this difference. In the case of the *Fis Adamnân*, the version is always described in the third person. In the case of *Virâf-nâme*, the version itself is given in the first person, as, it is *Virâf* himself who dictates the vision to a writer. In the first three chapters of the book, it is the author of the book who speaks and describes the state of affairs and events before the vision itself.

5. The books connected with the visions of both begin at first with, what can be called, an Introduction. The first three chapters of the *Virâf-nâme* are of that kind. The first three chapters or sections of the *Fis Adamnân* are of that kind. The introductory chapters of the *Virâf-nâme* can be said to be more pertinent to the subject, as they relate the state of affairs which led to the vision of *Ardai Virâf*. The introductory chapters of the *Fis Adamnân* do not give any account as to what led to the vision of *Adamnân*. They simply say that as God had revealed the mysteries of the Heavenly Kingdom to apostles and saints, he revealed them finally to *Adamnân*.

With reference to the subject of the circumstances that led to the vision, one point is worth noting here, though the *Fis Adamnân* does not refer to it. It is in connection with *Adamnân's* attempt to bring about the emancipation of women referred to above. Boswell thus speaks of it :

“Whatever the nature or extent of the evil (*viz.*, the compulsory military service by women), it was greatly taken to heart by *Adamnân's* mother *Ronat*, and dutiful as her son was to her, she counted his service as nought until he should effect the emancipation of women. One day, as they were on a journey—*Adamnân*, after his usual custom, carrying his mother on his back—they came to a battlefield, where so great had been the slaughter that the women lay, the soles of one touching the neck of another : but the most piteous sight of all was a woman with her head in one place and her body

in another, and her baby lying on the breast of the corpse with a stream of milk on one cheek, and a stream of blood on the other. At his mother's bidding, Adamnân set the woman's head upon the trunk, made the sign of the cross with his staff, and she arose and related her experiences in the next world between her death and resuscitation."¹

Now, laying aside the question of the miracle in this story related by later annals, one may observe the coincidence that the woman in the story of the miracle also had a vision. Her vision—whatever it may be—had suggested to Adamnân the idea of his own vision.

C.—Similarity in the methods of their visions.

6. Both are represented as having left their physical bodies in this world. Adamnân's soul "departed from out his body on the feast of John Baptist"², and he was enjoined "to return again into that body whence he had departed."³ Virâf's soul left his body and returned to it on the seventh day.⁴ The clergy and his seven sisters kept a watch over his soulless body during the period, and recited prayers.⁵

7. Both were accompanied in their visits to the other world by angels who guarded them when they were alive. Adamnân was guided by the angel that had been his guardian when he was "in the flesh"⁶. Virâf was guided by Sarosh,⁷ who is, according to the Avesta,⁸ the guardian angel, protecting the souls of men when alive.

8. Both were asked at the end of their heavenly journey to communicate what they saw to the people of the terrestrial world. Adamnân, who had first been to the land of Saints,

¹ Boswell, p. 20.

² Ibid 31, p. 43.

³ Ibid, Ch II, 17—19.

⁴ Viraf-nameh, Ch. IV, 1.

⁵ Fis Adamnân, 3. Boswell, 29.

⁶ Viraf-nameh, Ch. III, 1—2.

⁷ "Fis Adamnân" 3, Boswell, p. 29.

⁸ Yaçna LVII, Sraosh Yasht.

was, at the end of his journey, again taken to that land. There, he "heard, through the veil, the angel's voice enjoining him to return again into that body whence he had departed, and to rehearse in courts and assemblies, and in the great congregations of laymen and clerics, the rewards of Heaven and the pains of Hell, even as his guardian angel had revealed them unto him."¹

Virâf, who also had, at first, been to the abode of Ahura Mazda himself, was at the end of his journey, taken to that place again. There, he was asked by Ahura Mazda, to return to the material world and to communicate correctly what he had seen and known.²

D.—Points of Similarity in the details of the Visions.

Coming to the details of the visions themselves, we find the following points of similarities.

9. In both the versions, the gates to the other world are guarded by angels. In the Irish vision, "at the door of that Heaven, which is nearest on the hither side, sits the Archangel Michael and with him two youths, with irons in their laps to scourge and smite the sinners."³ In the Iranian vision, it is the Chinvat bridge that leads to the other world. It is guarded by the angel Mithra, assisted by other angels.* I have shown elsewhere,⁴ that this Mithra of the Irânians is the same as the Michael of the Christians.

¹ Fis Adamnain 32. Boswell, p. 44.

² Viraf-nameh, Chap. C, 3-4.

³ Fis Adamnain, 15. Boswell, pp. 35-36.

⁴ Viraf-nameh, Chap. V.

* *Vide* my paper, entitled "St. Michael of the Christians and Mithra of the Zoroastrians. A comparison". *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. XX, pp. 217-233. *Vide* my "Anthropological Papers," pp. 178-90.

10. In both visions, a bridge plays an important part. In Adamnân's vision, "an enormous bridge spans the glen reaching from one bank to the other."¹ Though the bridge is the same, it presents different breadths to different souls according to their righteousness or sin. Ardaï Virâf also has to pass over a bridge, known as the Chinvat baidge.² When a soul passes over it, it varies in breadth according as the soul is righteous or sinful. To allow the righteous Virâf to pass, it assumed the breadth of nine lances.³ The Virâf-nâmeh, which gives Ardaï Virâf's version, does not enter into the details of its size, etc., as the Fis Adamnân does, but other Pahlavi books, which refer to Iranian eschatology, and some of the views of which agree with those of the Virâf-nâmeh, give these details at some length. The Dadistan-i-Dinik⁴ says that, if the soul that crosses it is of a righteous person, it passes on to Heaven safely. If it is that of an unrighteous or sinful person, it drops from its middle or its end down into the deep abyss of Hell. It is described as a wooden beam, having several sides of various breadths, the smallest breadth being like that of the sharp edge of a sword. In the case of a righteous person it presents the breadth of nine lances, but in the case of a sinful person that of the blade of a razor.⁵

11. Both pass through several grades of Heaven before they reach the throne of God. The first land that Adamnân goes to is the Land of Saints, where he finds a band of saints. Then, the twelve Apostles and Virgin Mary with the holy virgins on her right hand form another band. Then comes the band of the patriarchs and prophets. Lastly, most splendid is the region of the Heavenly Host, in the midst of which stands

¹ Fis. Adamnân 22, Boswell, pp. 38-39.

² Virâf-nâmeh, Chap. III 1; IV 7; V 1,2; XVII 1; LIII 2-8.

³ Ibid, Chap. VI.

⁴ Questions 19 and 20.

⁵ Vide for this bridge, Vendidad XIX 29; Vishtasp Yasht 42; Yasna LXXI, 16; Bundehesh XII 7; Dadistan-i-Dinik XXI, 5; Saddar Ch. 4, Minokherad.

the throne of the Lord, the Glorious One, who is indēscribable.¹ Virāf also has to pass through three heavens before he goes to Garo-nmāna, the seat of God.² The first three heavens are the Satar-pâyâ, *i.e.*, the star-tracked, the Mahâ-pâyâ, *i.e.*, the moon-tracked, and the Khurshed-pâyâ, *i.e.*, the sun-tracked.

12. In Adamnân's region of the Lord's throne, there was the harmony of music and all melody and delight. Virāf's Garo-nmāna also was, as its very name implies, 'the house of song, music or hymns.'

13. Over the head of the Glorious One in Adamnân's region of the Lord, there was an arch "and the eye which should behold it would forthwith melt away."³ The Garo-nmāna of Virāf was so brilliant that the like of it Virāf had never seen.

14. Both come across souls whose good and evil deeds are equal. Adamnân meets with souls "in whom good and evil were equally balanced, and on the day of doom, judgment shall be passed between them, and their good shall quench their evil on that day; and then they shall be brought to the Heaven of Life, in God's own presence, through ages everlasting."⁴ Virāf also is taken to a place where the souls were to stay till the day of resurrection. They were the souls whose actions being judged in a balance by Mithra, as said elsewhere, their good deeds were found to be equal to their bad deeds. They meet with no punishment but feel hot and cold alternately.

15. Coming to the punishments in Hell, we find many punishments common in both the visions. The list of sins and sinners, enumerated in the Virāf-nameh, is very long. It occupies 80 chapters (19 to 99) out of its 131 chapters. The most common punishment in the Fis Adamnân is the

¹ Fis Adamnân, 4-9.

² Virāf-nameh.

³ Fis Adamnân, 8.

⁴ Fis Adamnân, 24.

⁵ Virāf-nameh, Ohap. VI.

torture by fire. I give below a table showing the punishments that are common to both :—

Forms of punishment.	References to Fis Adamnain. Sections.	References to the Viraf-nameh. Chapters.
1. Tortured by Fire.	21, 25, 27, 28.	55, 60, 63, 64, 85, 94.
2. Tortured by Serpents.	21	19, 28, 50, 56, 71, 86, 90.
3. Tortured by Demons.	26	28, 31, 48, 49, 50.
4. Tortured by being nailed.	27 (nailed through the hand).	91 and 92 (nailed through the eye); 77 (through the head); 9 (through the tongue).
5. Forced to stand in mire or mud up to the girdle or breast.	26	65
6. Torturing the tongues.	13	26, 29, 33, 63, 66, 79, 81, 82, 90, 96, 97.
7. Extremes of weather, cold (ice) and heat, cold wind.	26	55, 64, 89, 93 (cold wind).
8. Devoured by hounds, &c.	28	29 and 32, 34, 37, 43, 81. Devoured by Kharfastars or, noxious creatures 48 (by hounds like demons); 84 (by hounds).

16. There were a number of sins or sinners that were actually common to the versions of both. I give below a list of them :—

Description of the Sinners.	References to Fis Adamnain.	Reference to the Viraf-nameh.
Parricides	25 .	Sinners, not doing their duty towards their parents. 43, 65.
Liar	27	33, 36, 40, 45, 90, 97.

Description of the Sinners.	Reference to Fis Adamnân.	Reference to the Virâf-nâmeh.
Treachorous persons, robbers ...	27	27, 29, 39, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55, 67 80, 96,
Judges giving false judgments ...	27	79, 91
Adulterous women	29	24, 62, 69, 81, 85
Bad women, not attending to their duties and dealing in spells, &c.	27	26, 35, 44, 59, 63, 70, 78, 82, 87, 94, 95.
Men of loose character	27	71, 88
Heretics	27	47, 61

IV.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN AND THE MATERIALS
OF THE VERSIONS.

We saw above, that there are several points of resemblance between the Iraniau vision and the Irish vision, though they are not so numerous as those between the Italian vision, of Dante and the Iranian vision of Virâf. But in spite of these several points of similarity, as far as their immediate sources are concerned, in detail, both the visions come from different sources. The vision of Virâf is thoroughly Zoroastrian, that of Adamnân is thoroughly Christian, though not so thoroughly Christian in its details as that of Dante. If we except some allusions to Mary and to the Apostles, we may say that Adamnân's version is, as it were, more cosmopolitan than sectional. There are more striking points of similarity in the methods or the processes of the versions than in the details of the visits to Heaven or Hell. The sins that are narrated are generally referred to, more from a moral point of view, common to all religions, than from a special Christian point of view.

So, it seems that the source, from which Adamnân drew his inspiration, was one that was very ancient, from which

Virâf also seems to have drawn. Virâf added a good deal that was specially Zoroastrian, *e.g.*, his list of sins includes sins based, not on a moral or common cosmopolitan ground, but on Zoroastrian ground. Take, for example, the sins about the pollution of fire, sins in connection with customs relating to menstruation, &c., which are not referred to by Adamnân.

Now, we know that laying aside the details of sins and punishments in the Virâf-nameh, which seem to have been added by the author from a Zoroastrian point of view, and also laying aside the question of the forms of punishment which seem to have an alien source, the main features about the destiny of the soul in the other world have their origin in the Avesta. It appears, that in the case of Dante, whose time was much later and whose Divine Comedy contains a good deal of details in the vision of Heaven and Hell that is common with the Iranian vision, it is possible that the version of the Virâf-nâme may be one of the many direct sources of his work. But, in the case of Adamnân's *Fis Adamnân*, it is possible that a previous Iranian version, more simple in character than that of the Virâf-nâme, may have inspired his version, or the version from which he took his materials immediately.

Dr. Plumptre, in his learned work of the translation of Dante's Divine Comedy, gives a list of the possible sources which may have inspired Dante. In that list, we find "The Vision of Drithelm, reported by Bede in the seventh century."¹ Now, in our account of St. Adamnân, we have seen, that he had come into contact with Bede in Northumbria. It is possible, that Drithelm's vision, which latterly may have inspired Dante, may also have inspired, at first, St. Adamnân, and that it itself was inspired by an old Iranian vision.

¹ "The Commedia and Canzoniere of Dante Alighieri" by Dr. Plumptre. Vol. II p. 371.

We have seen above, that Erin and other ancient names of Ireland point to some ancient connection between that country and the land of the ancient Aryans, of which Iran was the principal part, nearer to Europe than India. Again, we know that there is the ancient Irish story of Cucullin and Conloch which resembles in many points the Iranian story of Rustam and Sohrab. I have dealt at some length on this similarity in my paper before this society entitled "The Irish Story of Cucullin and Conloch and the Persian Story of Rustam and Sohrab." It is possible, that like that story, the original Iranian version of a visit to the other world may have migrated to Ireland. Mr. Boswell gives a very interesting account of what may be called the history of the legend of the vision of the other world. He very properly claims a great antiquity for the legend and says that it "may be traced back along several widely divergent lines"², which he groups under the following heads:—

- 1 The Classical Tradition.
- 2 The Eastern or Oriental Tradition.
- 3 The Ecclesiastical Tradition, which is the result of "the fusion in the Early Christian Church of Hellenic and Oriental schools of thought."³ In other words, the Ecclesiastical tradition arose from the first two, *viz.*, the Classical and the Eastern.
- 4 The Irish Tradition, which is not an independent growth, but "a new departure."⁴ The Ecclesiastical tradition, when carried to Ireland, embodied some of the cognate ideas prevalent in (a) the local native mythology of the country and (b) in the ro-

² Journal, B. B. R. A. S. Vol. XVIII, pp. 317-329. *Vide my Asiatic Papers*, pp. 53-66.

³ "An Irish Precursor of Dante" by Boswell, p. 48.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴ *Ibid.*

mantic literature, and thus "acquired a fresh development." Ireland, being "the intellectual centre of Western Europe" in the later middle ages, influenced "the mediæval theories of the other world until the revival of the Classical learning."

Of these four traditions referred to by Mr. Boswell, the last two were, as said above, derived, as far as the main features of the visions are concerned, from the first two. In the second, *viz.*, the Oriental tradition, ancient Persia had, as pointed out by Mr. Boswell, a prominent part.



AN IRANIAN PRECURSOR OF DANTE.

I had the pleasure of reviewing Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco's book "The Place of Animals in Human Thought" in the "East and West" of July 1909. In that interesting book, the learned authoress has referred to the Irânian visionary Ardai Virâf and the Italian visionary Dante. My review of her book led to some correspondence, during which I had the pleasure of sending to her a copy of my paper entitled "The Divine Comedy of Dante and the Virâf-nâme of Ardai Virâf," read in February 1892 before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.¹ The perusal of that paper has led the lady to submit my name to the Dante Society for a paper or lecture and the Society has kindly extended to me an invitation to write a paper. It has given me great pleasure to accept that invitation and this paper is the result. Though I shall have to say in it many things that have already been said by me in the above paper, I have studied the subject anew with some further materials on Dante that have freshly come to light or that had not been used by me before.

The title of this paper has been suggested to me by a recent publication on Dante. It is a very interesting volume, entitled, "An Irish Precursor of Dante", by Mr. C. S. Boswell.

The object of this paper is to give a short description of the vision of the other world as given by an Irânian Saint Ardâi-Virâf and as preserved in the Pahlavi Virâf-nâme, and to give a few points of striking resemblance between that Irânian vision and the Italian vision of Dante.

¹ Journal of the B. B. A. Society Vol. XVIII Art. XIV pp. 192-205

I will divide my subject into three parts.

- I.—An account of the Irânian visionary, his book of vision and his vision.
- II.—A few points of resemblance between the Irânian and the Italian vision.
- III.—An inquiry into the origin and the materials of the visions.

I

An Account of the Iranian visionary, his book of the vision and his vision.

This subject may be treated under four heads.

- A.—Virâf-nâmeh, the book of the Irânian vision.
- B.—Virâf, the Irânian visionary.
- C.—The circumstances of the times of Virâf.
- D.—An account of the vision.

As this part of the subject has been embodied in the first paper¹ in this book, I will not repeat here, what I have said there.

II.

A few points of striking resemblance between the Iranian and the Italian visions.

Coming to the second division of our subject, I will refer to a few striking points of resemblance between the vision of Dante and that of his Irânian precursor. •

The late Dr. Haug was the first to draw our attention to the fact that there was some resemblance between the two

¹ Vide above, pp. 6-19.

visions. He said: "It is principally the description of hell and of some of the punishments awarded to the wicked, which bears occasionally a striking resemblance to the accounts to be found in Dante's *Inferno*, though it can not be supposed for a moment, that the book was actually known to the great Italian poet."¹ Mr. Bartholémy has, in his French translation² of the *Virâf-nâme*, dwelt at some length on some of the points of the "striking resemblance" referred to by Dr. Haug. In this paper, we will refer in details to these and to some other points of marked resemblance. We will treat this division of our subject under the following heads:—

- A.—A few general points of resemblance as regards the influence of the times and as regards the general plan of the visions.
- B.—Points of resemblance in their visions of Irânian Hamistagân and Italian Purgatory.
- C.—Points of resemblance in their visions of Heaven.
- D.—Points of resemblance in their visions of Hell.

A.—A few general points of resemblance as regards the influence of the times and as regards the general plan of the vision.

The first point that strikes one about the two visions—the Irânian and the Italian—is this: Both the visionaries were influenced by their times. To make this point clear, we must look, not so much to the careers of the visionaries themselves, as to the circumstances under which they wrote or described their visions. We have already referred³ to the Irânian visionary *Ardai virâf* and his times and to

¹ Haug's *Introductory Essays* in the appendix of the *Virâf-nâme* by Dastur Hoshnagji and Dr. Haug, p. LVI.

² *Arta Virâf-nâme* ou *Livre d'Ardâ-Virâf*. Introduction pp. XLVII-LIV.

³ Vide above pp. 6-19.

the circumstances which led to his vision. As to Dante, we will not enter into the details of his life, the main outlines of which are known to many or can be easily learnt from various works on his life and his works.

We know that there are controversies about a number of events in the life of the Italian poet-prophet.¹ We also know that writers, like Père Hardouin, even doubt that Dante was the author of the *Divine Comedy*.² He assigns the work to a follower of Wyklif in the fifteenth century. In spite of all these doubts and controversies, we have sufficient materials to frame an outline of the life of the Italian poet. His case is unlike that of Ardaſ Viráf, for whose life we have absolutely no materials.

The circumstances which led Dante to write his *Divine Comedy* are well known. We will describe here, in the words of Mr. Herbert Baynes, the state of Italy at the time when Dante wrote.

“The Church and the World were at open warfare, so that society was split into at least two factions, the Papal adherents and the Imperialists . . . The chaos of outer relations had its reflex in the spiritual life of those times. . . Society had lost its ideals. Righteousness had given place to expediency. Hence the prophet of his age had to sing to eager listeners a message of awful grandeur, of life-long significance. He could not but show them the Hell in which they were living, the Purgatory through which, as he believed, it was possible for them to go, in order that, by repentance, they might reach the Paradise prepared for the redeemed.”

Another writer says on this point, “He was a patriot, and he had been exiled from his native city. He was a Christian, and he saw the Church of Christ debased and defiled. He beheld the evils of his time, both political and

¹ Vide Plumptre's *Dante*, Vol. I, Introduction pp. XXX-III.

² *Ibid* p. XXXI.

ecclesiastical, but he was impotent to redress them."¹ So, what he was impotent to do by hand, sword or rod, he tried to do by pen.

Thus, the first point of similarity between Viraf and Dante, outside their respective works, was this important fact, that both were influenced by their times. Their visions were the results of their attempts to set right, what, they thought saw and believed, was wrong in their countries. It was the religious disorder, which followed the change of rulers that led to the vision of Viraf. It was political disorder which had its reflex in the spiritual life of the country, that influenced the strains of the Italian poet. Of each of them, it can be truly said, that, though his "treatment of the theme may be repugnant to modern ways of thinking," it was "not only justified, but necessitated, by the beliefs and traditions universally accepted in his own day."²

Time, the greatest of reformers and innovators, often produces men wanted for the occasion. As Dean Plumptre points out, "the interdict which Gregory X laid on the city from 1273-1276 must have worked with a strange effect" in Dante as a boy. "No bells rung, no masses said, the gates of heaven closed by him who had the keys that he might open—this" says Dean Plumptre "I take it, must have heightened the natural susceptibility of the devout boy and borne strange fruit in after years³." Not only that, but Dante saw, as it were with an inner vision, that times were out of joint in his country. Religion, society, politics all required a thorough change. Hence his prophetic visions suggesting the necessary changes.

Having spoken at some length about the circumstances of the times that led both these visionaries to describe their

¹ J. E. C. Welldon, on "Dante's Self-Portraiture", in the *Nineteenth Century* of November 1909. p. 844.

² "An Irish Precursor of Dante", by C. S. Boswell p. 4.

³ "The *Commedia* and *Canzoniere* of Dante" by Dr. Plumptre Vol. I. Introduction, p. XXXVII—XXXVIII.

visions, we will now speak of other points of general resemblance in their visions.

2. The vision of Virâf, from the point of view of its antiquity, and from the fact of its scene being in an ancient land, may be taken by some as a myth, but at the bottom of all that may appear quaint and strange, the fact remains, that a vision like that described by Virâf is the means adopted by many a moralist to set right the evils of the times. We see that, even in the case of Dante. He was taken to be a myth-like wizard even in his life-time. He was considered, at it were, as a wizard like Virgil, his countryman of bygone ages, whom he had followed in several points. For example, it is said, that he himself had overheard a woman of Verona telling her old husband, that he (Dante) went to hell and returned as he liked and told to the people of the world the news of the people in the other world. Even some modern writers speak of him as "the great magician" though they speak from their own point of view.¹

As it happens in the case of many a seer and prophetic writer, his birth was connected with many a miraculous event. His mother was said to have had a dream before his birth. Boccacio narrates some legends about the mother of Dante, which reminds us of the legends about the mother of Zoroaster. For example, his mother had a dream "that she gave birth to a son under a lofty laurel and by a clear stream; that he grew up feeding on the laurel berries and drinking of the water of the brook; that he became a shepherd and strove to gather the laurel leaves for a crown; and that, as he struggled for them, he was transformed into a peacock."²

3. Virâf's Virâf-nâmeh has come to be considered as a religious book among the Parsees, and, as such, is rendered

¹ "An Irish Precursor of Dante" by C.S. Boswell (1908), p. 3.

² Dean Plumptre's Dante (1886), Vol. I, Introduction, pp. XXXVI-XXXVII.

into Pazend, Persian and Gujarati. The same is the case with Dante's Divine Comedy which has come to be considered as a religious work. The following story is told of a Pisan, a student of Dante, and of Fransesco Petrarca (Petrarch), a contemporary of Dante. One day, the latter asked of the former a book of Dante. The Pisan produced Dante's Monarchia. Petrarca said that he did not want that book, but the Divine Comedy. The Pisan asked, all surprized, how he dared to call the Divine Comedy the work of Dante. He said: How could such a work be written by man "without a special gift of the Holy Spirit?" He attributed the work to the Holy Spirit rather than to Dante.¹

4. We find that both seem to speak of "the state of souls after death" in their writings, but, while so doing, they take a "wider range" of morality as understood in their countries and ages.

5. The arrangment in the description of their respective visions is well nigh the same. Both the pilgrims, at first, make their own observations on what they see in their heavenly journey. They then put questions to their guides asking information on what they see, and the guides give an explanation. The questions of Virâf to his guides have, in many cases, assumed a stereotyped form. For example, his question to his guide in his visit of the different parts of Hell is the same as follows: "Donntan tan meman vanâs kard mûn robân avin pâdafarâs idrunêt", *i. e.* "What sin has this body, whose soul meets with such a punishment, committed?" The questions of Dante are varied.

6. We find, that both Virâf and Dante undertook their heavenly pilgrimage after great hesitation, and after great many doubts about their fitness for such a great work. Virâf, before submitting to his selection, wished to ascertain what the sacred divination about his

¹ Vide in "The Church Quarterly Review," Vol XLVI (1898), the article on "The Posthumous popularity of Dante", pp. 165-168.

selection was. It was only after determining by lot, that he undertook the divine mission. In the case of Dante also, we find a similar expression of doubt about his fitness for the great mission. When Virgil offers to take him to the other world, he says:—

“ Test well my courage, see if it avail,
Ere to that high task I am sent by thee.

* * *

But why should I go ? Who will this concede ?
I nor Æneas am, nor yet am Paul;
Worthy of that nor I myself indeed,
Nor others deem me. Wherefore, to this call
If now I yield, I fear me lest it be
A journey vain.

(Hell, C. II, 11-36.)

7. Both, Dante and Virâf, make their heavenly pilgrimages, when in the grasp of profound slumber. Virâf's sleep lasted for seven days and nights. Dante does not tell us for how many days did his vision last. He merely says, that he was sleep-opprest :

“ How I there entered, can I not well say,
So sleep-opprest was I in that same hour
When from the true path thus I went astray.”

(Hell, C. I., 10-12.)

8 Both went through all the parts of the other world. But, the order of their visits to these parts is a little different. Virâf first went to the Hamistagân, which somewhat corresponds to the Christian Purgatory, and then to Paradise, and lastly to Hell. Dante first went to Hell, then to Purgatory, and lastly to Paradise.

9. Both had two persons as their guides. Virâf had for his guides, Sarosh, the messenger of God, and Âtar, the

angel presiding over fire. Dante had Virgil and Beatrice for his guides. In the case of Viraf, the guides were angels, in the case of Dante, they were human beings whom he took to be very saintly. Sarosh and Âtar accompanied Viraf through all the three regions, but Virgil accompanied Dante to Hell and Purgatory, and Beatrice to Paradise. The guides of Viraf offer their kind services to him in the following words (Ch. V.): "Come on, we will show you Heaven and Hell, and the light and splendour, rest and comfort, pleasure and cheerfulness, delight and joy, and fragrance that are the reward received in Heaven by the righteous people. We will show you darkness and distress, misery and misfortune, pain and grief, disease and sickness, terror and fright, torture and stench, that are the punishments of various kinds, which the evil-doers, sorcerers and sinful men undergo in Hell. We will show you the place of the righteous and that of the unrighteous. We will show you the reward of those, who have good faith in God and Archangels, and the good and evil, which are in Heaven and Hell." Compare with this, the words of Dante's guide, Virgil, when he offers to be the leader of Dante in Hell.

"Wherefore for thee I think and judge, 'tis well
 That thou should'st follow, I thy leader be,
 And guide thee hence to that eternal cell,
 Where thou shalt hear sharp wails of misery,
 Shalt see the ancient spirits in their pain,
 For which, as being the second death, men cry:
 Those thou shalt see who, in the hope to gain,
 When the hour comes, the blest ones' happier clime,
 Can bear the torturing fire not yet complain.
 To these would'st thou with eager footsteps climb,
 A soul shall guide thee worthier far than I."

(Hell, C. I., 112-122.)

10. Both, Viraf and Dante, find in their guides, persons, who feel offended by their past conduct, and who,

before leading them forward in their heavenly journey, taunt them for their past offensive deeds. Âtar, the guide of Viraf, taunts him for neglecting and not taking proper care of fire, over which he (Âtar) presides (Ch. X). Beatrice, the guide of Dante, taunts him for neglecting her and not keeping her memory green. (Purg., C. XXX., ll. 121-140.) She says:

Awhile my face was strong his life to build,
 And I, unveiling to him my young eyes,
 In the straight path to lead him on was skilled.
 So soon as I had reached the point where lies
 Our second age, and I my life had changed,
 Me he forsook, and chose another prize.
 And when I had from flesh to spirit ranged,
 And loveliness and virtue in me grew,
 I was to him less dear and more estranged.

(Purgatory, C. XXX., ll. 121-129.)

11. Some of the later manuscripts of the Viraf Nameh, especially the manuscripts of the Gujarati version, are illustrated by pictures, just as Dante's works are illustrated. As to Dante, we are asked to turn to "the illuminators and painters of the fourteenth century, if we would attempt to discover what images stood before Dante's mind when he was writing the profoundly imaginative work to which, as he himself tells us, both Heaven and Earth had set their hands."¹ We have no such guide to discover what images stood before Viraf's mind. The pictures that illustrate the later manuscripts of the Gujarati versions of the Viraf nameh seem to be the result of the imagination of local painters and not an imitation of any older pictures. I have with me a manuscript of the Gujarati version of the Viraf nameh. It was written in 1121 Yazda Zardi i. e. 1752 A. D. It contains a number of

"Dante and the Fine Arts" (The Nineteenth Century of May 1902. Vol. LV. p. 785).

pictures of the scenes in Heaven and Hell as described by Viraf. All the pictures are very rough and they may possibly be the rude productions of the writer of the manuscript.

B.—Points of resemblance in the visions of Iranian Hamistagan and Italian Purgatory.

After considering a few points of striking resemblance in the two visions, as regards the influence of their times, and as regards the general plan of the visions, we now come to the points of resemblance in their narratives of the different parts of the other world. We will first speak of the points of resemblance between the Iranian Hamistagan and the Italian Purgatory. We have described above what the Iranian Hamistagan is.

1. *Three steps* led Viraf to the top of the Chinvat bridge, whence the departed souls part to go to their destinations of Hamistagân, Heaven or Hell. Having mounted these three steps Viraf went to the Hamistagân. Each step reminded him of *humata*, *hukhta* and *hvarshsta* i.e. good thoughts, good words and good deeds. (Chap. IV, 7). The portal of Dante's Purgatory, also has *three steps* of varied hue.

“A gate I saw, and three steps upward make
An access to it, each of diverse hue,
And there a Warder sat who never spake.”

(Purgatory, Canto IX, ll. 76-78).

The first step was of “white marble” which mirrored all his features, the second was of “dark rugged stone” and the third of “fiery porphyry” (Ibid, Canto IX, ll. 95-101).

They symbolized “the divine knowledge which sees itself in the mirror of the Divine Word....., the rough sternness of mortification....., and the glow of burning love.” In

other words, they symbolized the three elements of repentance viz contrition, confession and satisfaction.

2. Both are led by their guides when taking the three steps

The guides of Viraf welcomed him, and taking hold of his hands led him on for the three steps. So did the guide of Dante.

“O’er the three steps my Guide then led me on,
With all good will.”

(Purg. C. IX, ll. 106-107).

3. With both, the way to the Hamistagân or the Purgatory, is from over a mountain.

It is over the Chinvat Bridge, that, according to Viraf, Mithra, the judge, holds his court, and judging the actions of the departed souls, sends them to Heaven, Hell or Hamistagân. Dante gives to his judge, Minos, a seat in the second circle of Hell. Dante’s Minos only judges the souls of wicked persons. The bridge, which leads to the Hamistagan, is situated on the top of a mountain. We find Dante’s Purgatory also situated on a mountain (Purg., C. III, ll. 3,6,14).

4. According to both the pilgrims, the utmost punishment, that the souls there suffer, are the extremes of temperature, nothing else. The guides of Viraf, speaking to him on this subject, say: “Their punishment is cold and heat (resulting) from the movement of the atmosphere and no other evil” (Ch. VI). The guide of Dante says to him:—

“To suffer freezing cold and torturing blaze,

Bodies like this doth Power Supreme ordain,

Which wills to veil from us His work and ways.”

(Purg., C. III, ll. 31-33).

5. Both wash their face or body during their visits of the other world and put on a girdle. We read in the Purgatory the following lines:—

"Go then, and gird thou this man, as I teach,
 With a smooth rush, and see thou cleanse his face,
 So that each stain that lingers there thou bleach;
 For' twere not meet his eye with any trace
 Of cloud and mist to that first Angel go,
 Of those who have in Paradise their place.

(Purg. C. I, ll. 94-99).

Dante's allusions to the custom of girding the waist with a cord and of washing the face before performing a religious act or ceremony remind us of the Zoroastrian custom of washing the face and girding the sacred thread (*kusti*) on similar occasions.

According to the *Viraf-nameh*, Arda Viráf also "washed his hand and body and put on new clothes". Among the Zoroastrians, even now, the putting on of new clothes generally includes the putting on of a new sacred thread.

The Franciscan cord, referred to above by Dante, is believed to give an idea of the "cord of loveliness." Among the Iranians, the sacred thread is believed to give an idea of innocence, as it is prepared from the wool of the innocent sheep; and its girding gives an idea of preparedness to be always up to do one's duty towards fellowmen.

The process of washing the face is according to Dr. Plumptre, significant in its symbolism. "Contact with evil isnot without its perils. The man, catches something of the taint of the vices on which he looks...Before the work of purification can begin.....he must be cleansed from the blackness of the pit."

The Iranian idea of washing the face is well-nigh similar. Physical purity is symbolic of mental and spiritual purity. So, the washing of the face and of the exposed portions of the body is necessary before reciting prayers, which almost always begin with a short formula of repentance.

We find very few points of striking resemblance between Dante's version of the Purgatory and Viraf's version of the

Hamistagân. The reason is, that Viraf's account of his visit of the Hamistagân is very short. Dante's account of his visit of the Purgatory is long. But one must remember, that, as pointed out by Dr. Plumptre, Dante's poem "is essentially autobiographical. It is something more than a polemic against the crimes of the Roman Curia or the factions of Florence; something more than the summing up of the creed of Mediæval Christendom,..... We might almost speak of this section of his poem as the 'Confessions of Dante Alighieri'."¹

C.—Points of resemblance in their visions of Heaven.

We now come to the points of resemblance in their visions of Paradise.

1. Both go direct from the Hamistagan and the Purgatory to their first Heaven.

2. The heavens of both, Dante and Viraf, receive their names from the heavenly bodies, though their numbers differ. Viraf has four heavens. Dante has ten. The heavens of Viraf are *Setar-pâyâ* (i.e. of the, star pathway, or track) *Mihâ-pâyâ* (i.e. of the moon pathway), *Khorshed-pâyâ* (i.e. of the sunipathway) and Garotmân. Dante has the following ten heavens—the heavens of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the Fixed Stars, the Primum Mobile and the Empyrean.

3. The last Heaven of Dante is the seat of the Almighty God, just as Garotman, the last Heaven of Viraf, is the seat of Ahura Mazda.

4. Dante saw the divine presence of God in a brilliant point:—

"I saw a point so radiant appear,
So keenly bright, it needs must be the eye

Should shrink and close before its brightness clear."

(Parad., XXVIII, ll. 16-18).

Viraf also hears His voice and sees Him in a light (Ch. CI, 11)

5. Both see in Paradise, the departed illustrious men of their respective countries. Dante sees there, men like Thomas of Aquinas, Albert of Cologne, and Charles Martel. Viraf sees men like Zoroaster, King Vishtâp, Frashaostar, and Jamâsp.

6. Both see in Paradise, the first father of men. Dante sees and converses with the soul of Adam. Viraf sees the *farohar* or the holy spirit of Gayomard, the Zoroastrian Adam.

7. Both have the grades of their heavens rising in importance in proportion to the meritoriousness of their acts. Viraf reserves the higher heavens for the good and just rulers of the land, for devout worshippers, warriors who fight for a just cause, men who destroy noxious creatures that do great harm to mankind, men who add to the prosperity of their country by irrigation and fresh plantations, and women who are possessed of good thoughts, good words and goods deeds and who are obedient to their husbands. Dante sees in his higher heavens, theologians, martyrs who have met with death while fighting for a good cause, righteous kings, and men who are devoted to pious contemplation.

8. Both see in Paradise, the souls of the pious and the virtuous in brilliant glory. Viraf saw the "Light which is called the highest of the high," "I saw" says he, "the pious on thrones of gold and in gold embroidered clothes. They were men whose brightness was the same as the brightness of the sun" (Ch. IX, 4). Compare with this, that which Dante saw in the highest of the highest heavens:—

"Their faces had they all of living flame,
Their wings of gold, and all the rest was white,
That snow is none such purity could claim."

(Parad., XXXI, ll. 13-15).

9. Both are rewarded in Heaven for their sacred pilgrimage. St. Bernard asks for salvation on behalf of Dante from the Blessed Virgin :—

“ He who stands here, who, from the lowest pit
Of all creation, to this point hath pass’d
The lines of spirits, each in order fit,
On thee for grace of strength himself doth cast,
So that he may his eyes in vision raise
Upwards to that Salvation noblest, last.”

(Parad., C. XXXIII., 22-27).

Compare with this, the words, in which Viraf is offered immortality by the souls of the virtuous, who welcome him to Paradise: “O holy one, how hast thou come from that perishable world of troubles to this imperishable world free from troubles! Taste immortality, for, here, you will find eternal pleasure (Ch. X.)

St. Bernard, who had, during the last part of Dante’s journey to Paradise, taken the place of Beatrice, takes Dante at the end of his journey to the Blessed Virgin. Sraosh and Âtar, the guides of Viraf, take him to the seat of the Almighty.

10. Both have to communicate their heavenly experiences. At the end of the journey, Dante prays for strength and power to communicate to men, what he saw in his heavenly tour :—

“ Light Supreme, that dwellest far away
From mortal thoughts, grant Thou this soul of mine
Some scant revival of that great display,
And to my tongue give Thou such strength divine,
That of Thy glory at the least one beam
May to the race to come in beauty shine.

(Parad., XX XIII, 67-72).

At the end of Viraf’s journey, Ahura Mazda asks him to communicate to his countrymen what he saw in the other

world. Ahura Mazda says: "O pious Ardaī Viraf, messenger of the Mazdayasnans ! Thou art a good servant; return to the material world. Tell exactly to the world what thou hast seen and learnt. I, Ahura Mazda, am with thee. Say to the wise that I recognize and know every one who speaks the truth" (Ch. CI). Then with regard to the particular errand, for which Ardaī Viraf had made his pilgrimage to the next world, Ahura Mazda sends the following message through him to his co-religionists :

" O Ardaī Viraf ! Say thus to the Mazdayasnans of the world : There is only one path (and) it is the path of Righteousness. It is the path of the ancients. All other paths are no paths. Go along that one path which is that of Righteousness. Do not turn away from it, whether in prosperity or in adversity and in any case whatever. Entertain good thoughts, utter good words, practise good actions. Continue in that very religion which Spitamān Zarathusht accepted from me and which Vishtasp promulgated in the world. Hold fast the law of virtue and abstain from vice. Bear this always in mind, that cattle will be (reduced to) dust, horse will be dust, gold and silver will be dust, the body of man will be dust. He alone will not be (reduced to) dust who will praise righteousness and do the works of righteousness."

Having spoken of a few points of similarity in the Persian and Italian pilgrims' visions of Heaven, we will now speak of Hell.

D.—Points of resemblance in their visions of Hell.

1. Coming to their visions of Hell, we find, that both, before entering into Hell, come across words which give them an idea of the hopelessly miserable condition of the place. Dante reads those words on the gate of Hell. Viraf hears them from his guides, as the utterance of a sinful soul, that has just

entered into Hell. The characteristic words of despair which Dante reads are: "Ye that pass in, all hope abandon ye." (Hell, C. III., 9). Those which Viraf hears are: "Val kudâm zamîk vazlûnam va mûn pavan panâh vakhdûnam?" i.e. "To which land shall I go and whose protection shall I take?" (Chap. XVII, 7).

2. On entering into Hell, the guides of both the pilgrims hold them by their *hands* to give them courage and carry them in safety. Viraf says: "Srosh and Âtar caught hold of my *hand*, so that I went on without any danger" (Ch. XVIII, 1, 2). Dante says:—

"Then me, his *hand* firm clasped in mine, he brought,
With joyful face that gave me comfort great."

(Hell, C. III, 19-20).

3. Both find their hells in the form of an immeasurably deep abyss. Viraf found it like a "pit whose bottom would not be reached by 1,000 cubits. And, even if all the (fragrant) wood in the world were put on fire in the most stinking and darkest Hell, it would not give out any (fragrant) smell. And although the souls of the sinful there are as close to one another as the ear is to the eye, and although they are as many in number as the hair on the mane of a horse, they do not see, nor hear the sound from one another. Everyone thinks that he is alone" (Ch. LIV., 3-8). Dante describes the depth of his Hell in a similar tone:—

"And with mine eyes thus rested, I to see
Turned me, stood up, and steadfast gazed around.
To know the region where I chanced to be.
In very deed upon the brink I found
Myself, of that abyss of direst woe,
Where thunders roar, of groans that know no bound.
Dark was it, deep, o'erclouded so below,
That though I sought its depths to penetrate,
Nought to mine eyes its form did clearly show."

(Hell, C. IV., 4-12).

4. Both have to cross a *river of tears*, and that a large river, before they go further into Hell. The river of Viraf was formed by the great number of tears shed after the death of a person. The guides ask Viraf to advise the people of the world, not to lament too much for the death of a departed person, but to submit to it patiently as to a command from God. Mark again, that the river spoken of by Dante is Acheron, and it is also, as Dr. Plumptre says, "the stream of lamentations" (Vol. I, p. 16, note to l. 71).

5. Both find a number of souls waiting on the other side of the river with a view to cross it. Viraf says: "I saw a large river as dark as the gloomy Hell. There were many souls and spirits on that river." Dante says:

"On a great river's banks a troop I saw
.....eager to passo'er."

6. Both ask their guides as to what those rivers are, and what the souls waiting on their shores. Viraf, asked: "What is this river and who are these people that are waiting in a distressed mood?" (Ch. XVI). This was what Viraf saw and said before he entered into the portals of Hell. Compare with this, what Dante saw before he entered into the first circle of Hell:—

"And when I further looked on that drear seat,
On a great river's bank a troop I saw,
Wherefore I said, "O Master, I entreat
That I may know who these are, what the law
Which makes them seem so eager to pass o'er;
As through the dim light they my notice draw."

(Hell, C. III., 70-75).

Dante's guide replies:—

"My son.....
Those who beneath the wrath of God have died,
From all lands gather to this region dark,
And eager are to pass across the tide."

(Hell, C. III., 121-124).

7. Both divide their hells in a number of parts, and both see, the last of all, in the deepest Hell, Satan, the author of Evil. Dante sees Lucifer in Guidecca, the last of the four concentric circles of the tenth circle. Viraf sees Ganâk-Mino in the last of the different parts of Hell (Chap. C, 1).

8. On entering into the place of the wicked ones, both meet with excessive cold. Viraf found a cold wind blowing. A more stinking wind than that he had never seen in the world (Chap. XVII, 10-11. Chap. XVIII, 3). Compare with this what Dante says of the cold in that part of Hell, where he saw Lucifer :

“How icy cold I then became and numb,

Ask it not, Reader, for I cannot write;

All language would be weak that dread to sum.”

(Hell, C. XXXIV, 22-25.)

9. When Viraf goes near Satan, he hears him taunting the sinful souls that had fallen victims to his evil machinations, in the following words:—“Why were you eating the food supplied to you by God and doing my work ? You did not think of your Creator, but acted according to my dictates” (Chap. C). Dante sees Lucifer punish Judas, Brutus and Cassius, who, following his evil temptations, had turned out great traitors.

10. Though most of the punishments in the Hell of Viraf are Persian in their character, and those in the Hell of Dante are retributive according to the notions of the mediæval theology of Europe, there are a few, that are common in the visions of both. The following serve as instances.

(a) Serpents play a prominent part in the punishments of both. The seventh Bolgia in the Hell of Dante where robbers are punished, is the Bolgia of serpents. According to Viraf, unnatural lust, oppressive and tyrannical misrule, adultery, misappropriation of religious property and endowments, and falsehood are visited with punishments by the sting of dreaded and terrible snakes.

(b) Again, the eating of the human skulls and brains is a punishment common to the hells of both the pilgrims. According to Viráf, it is the culprit who is made to eat these. According to Dante, it is the victim who generally punishes the offender or culprit by eating off his head, brains &c. According to Viráf, fraudulent traders who used false measures and weights were made to eat human brains and blood (Ch. LXXX). So were men, who had got rich by dishonest means and by stealing the property of others, punished in Hell by being made to eat human skull and brains (Ch. XLVI). An unjust judge, who gave his decisions under the influence of bribes, is made to slay in Hell his own children and eat their brains (Ch. XCI.) In Dante, we find a victim punish his offender by eating his head and brains. We find that Count Ugolino, who was put into prison on the strength of false accusations of Archbishop Ruggieri, and was there compelled by the pangs of starvation to eat the flesh of his own children, punishes his calumniator Ruggieri in Hell by eating his head and brains (Hell, XXXIII).

(c) The seizing, tearing and flaying of the souls of the sinful by ferocious animals is also a common punishment in the hells of Viráf and Dante. It is the fierce Cerberus, that does all this in the Hell of Dante (Hell, C. VI., 13-18). It is the Kharfactars (*i. e.* the noxious animals), the smaller ones of which are as high as mountains, that do all this and annoy the souls of the sinful in the Hell of Viráf (Ch. XVIII).

(d) The suspending of sinful persons with their heads downwards is another punishment common to both (Dante, Hell, C. XIX, 23: XXXIV, 14. Viráf, Ch. LXIX, LXXIV, LXXIX., LXXX., LXXXVIII). In Viráf's vision, it is the dishonest judges and traders and seducers that suffer this punishment. In the vision of Dante, it is the Simonists that suffer it.

(e) Another punishment, common to the visions of both, is that of covering the bodies of sinners with heavy

metals. According to Viraf, a faithless wife meets the punishment of having her body covered over with heavy iron (Ch. LXXXV). According to Dante, a heavy mantle of lead is the punishment that a hypocrite meets with in the sixth part of the eighth circle of Hell.

A painted people there met our regard

... ..
O'erlaid without with gold, that dazzling shows,
Within all lead, and of such crushing weight,
That those had seemed of straw that Frederick chose.

(Hell, C. XXIII. 58-66.)

(f) The twisting of the different parts of the body is another punishment common to the hells of both. In the eighth circle of Dante's hell, it is the fraudulent soothsayers that meet with this punishment.

"Each seemed to me distorted wondrously
From the chest upwards even to the face.

(Hell, C. XX. ll. 11-12.)

In Viraf's hell, it is the cruel masters, who exact too much work from their beasts of burden with out giving them adequate food, that meet with this punishment (Ch LXXVII).

(g) Again, heavy rain and snow, hailstones, severe cold, and foul smells, are punishment common to the hells of both the pilgrims. According to Dante, it is a glutton who meets with the punishment of being pelted with rain (C. VI., 53, 54.) According to Viraf, those who demolish bridges over rivers, those who are irreverent, those who speak an untruth and perjure themselves, and those who are greedy, avaricious, lusty, and jealous, meet with these punishments (Ch. LV.)

11. Viraf gives a general picture of Hell in the following words (Ch. XVIII):—

"I felt cold and heat, dryness and stench to such an extent as I never saw in the world nor heard of. When I

proceeded further, I saw the voracious abyss of Hell, like a dangerous pit leading to a very narrow and horrible place, so dark that one must hold (another) by the hand, and so full of stench that anybody, who inhales the air by the nose, struggles, trembles, and falls. The noxious creatures tear and seize and annoy the souls of the wicked in the Hell in a way that would be unworthy of a dog."

Compare with this, Dante's description of the third circle of Hell (C. VI., 8-15) :—

"—eterne, curst, cold, and working woe,
Its law and state unchanged from first to last ;
Huge hail, dark water, whirling clouds of snow
There through the murky air come sweeping on ;
Foul smells the earth which drink this in below,
And Cerberus, fierce beast, like whom is none,
Barks like a dog from out his triple jaws,
At all the tribe those waters close upon."

12. Adultery, cheating, misrule, slander, avarice, lying, apostacy, fraud, seduction, pederasty, sorcery, murder, theft, rebellion, and such other moral sins are seen by both the pilgrims as punished in Hell,

A few points of difference.

We have, so far, examined the various parts of resemblance between the two visions. Before proceeding to the last division of our subject, we would note here a few points which distinguish one vision from the other.

1. Firstly, there is very little in Viraf's vision of that "personality" which we find in Dante's Divine Comedy. The personages that are introduced are very few and they are mostly the contemporaries of Zoroaster. They are rather introduced to show the bright side of human nature. The only personage of the evil stamp that is introduced is one Davânôs, but he also is introduced to present before the readers his good characteristic, a redeeming feature in his

life. He had all along lived a bad life, but once, while passing, he saw an animal straining itself to catch hold of a bundle of grass lying at some distance. Davânôs pushed with his feet the bundle of grass before that animal. Though he was cast into Hell for his evil life, his foot was saved from that misery and was put into a state of bliss for his having done by its means a good action. The moral, intended to be shown, is, that every action, however trivial, is sure to be rewarded by God.¹

The "personality" of Dante's Divine Comedy is considered to be one of its principal faults.²

2. Secondly, from a literary point of view, there can be no comparison between the Divine Comedy and the Viraf Nâmeh. When, on the one hand, Macaulay is said to have remarked, that "As soon read a Babylonian brick as a Canto of Dante", on the other hand, looking to the present age of minute investigations, another modern writer has said that "its mechanism is as precise as the structure of a delicate watch." Without going into the *pros* and *cons* of these opposite views, we may say that, Dante's work is considered to be a masterpiece of Italian poetry. Viraf Nâmeh has no claim to any literary excellence. In the Divine Comedy, it is the heavenly pilgrim himself who records the vision of his imaginary visit to the next world in his best poetic style. The Viraf-nâmeh, though it describes the vision in the words of the pilgrim himself, is the work of somebody else, who narrates in simple prose, what he supposes to be a great event in the religious history of the country. Whatever may be said of Dante as a person and of

¹ Countess Cazaresco points to this story of Davânôs as belonging to "the cycle of Sultan Murad immortalized by Victor Hugo" (*Vide* her "The Place of Animals in Human Thought," p. 164.).

² *Vide* The Quarterly Review, Vol. 200 (1904), pp. 358 et seq., "The Advocatus Diaboli on the Divina Commedia."

his faults of personalities as a writer, there is a consensus of opinion that he is one of the poets of the highest type.¹

3. Thirdly, in the case of Dante, it is he who himself writes down the vision. It is he who speaks from the beginning to the end. In the case of Viráf, he sends for a scribe and dictates the vision to him.

III.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN AND THE MATERIALS OF THE VISIONS.

Now, remains the question as to what are the origins of the two visions.

Though there are many points of resemblance between the two visions, many of the details come from different sources. The vision of Viráf is thoroughly Zoroastrian, that of Dante thoroughly Christian. As to the vision of Viráf, though a great part of the details is original, the main features about the destiny of the soul in the other world have their origin in the Avesta. The fifth and the seventeenth chapters of the Viráf Nameh are, as it were, a clear and amplified version of a portion of the nineteenth Chapter of the Vendidad. These chapters are based on the very doctrine of the future destiny of the soul after death, as believed by the ancient Zoroastrians.

The translation—which was rather an imperfect translation—by Mr. J. A. Pope in 1818 of the mutilated Persian Version of the Viráf-nameh had led some to believe that the visions of Viráf were derived from the Christian source of Isaiah's Ascent. But the late Dr. Haug, who was the first to write upon this subject and whose learned presence in our midst as the Professor of Sanskrit in the Deccan

¹ Vide "Dante and the Art of Poetry", Quarterly Review of 1899. Vol. 189, pp. 289 et seq.

College had greatly helped and encouraged Iranian studies, had clearly shown that this was not the case. M. Barthélemy in his excellent translation (*Livre d'Arda Virâf*, Introduction, p. XXVII), wherein he has dwelt upon some of the above striking points of resemblance, agrees with Dr. Haug and says: "Rien ne justifie les tentative faites pour montrer que les vision de l'Arda Viraf dérivent de celles contenues dans l'Ascension du prophète Isaïe, car elles n'ont entre elles aucune relation historique."

As to the question of the origin or source of Dante's vision, Dante "seems to have had (like Shakespeare) the power of attracting materials from every possible source."¹ Dr. Plumptre inquires into the question, as to "How far Dante was indebted to those who had preceded him in recording their visions of the Unseen World."² He says that primarily the sixth book of Virgil's *Æneid* supplied him with many materials. Among other possible sources of inspiration, he points to the following :—

1. The Vision of Hades in the *Odyssey* (Bk. XI).
2. The mythical representations of the unseen in the *Gorgias*, the *Phædo*, the *Republic* of Plato.
3. The Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas, quoted by Tertullian and Augustine which "abound in such revelations of the Unseen World."
4. The story of Trajan as given in the life of Gregory the Great, by Paulus Diaconus.
5. The Vision of Drithelm reported by Bede in the seventh century.
6. The Vision of Wettin of Reichenau in 824.
7. ,, Prudentius, Bishop of Troyes, in 839.
8. ,, Charles the Bald in 875.
9. ,, Charles the Fat in 888.
10. ,, St. Brandan in the 11th. Century.

¹ "The Nineteenth Century" of Nov. 1909, p. 824. ² Vol. II, p. 371.

11. The Vision known as St. Patrick's Purgatory in the 12th century.
12. The vision of the Descent of St. Paul into Hell.
13. " " Walkelin.
14. " " Alberic of Monte Cassino in the 12th century.
15. The vision of Matilda.
16. The vision of the Unseen World by Dante's own master Brunetto Latini¹.

After giving a long list of the principal visions, Dr. Plumptre adds: "In each case, there are sufficiently striking parallelisms with the *Commedia* to render the hypothesis that Dante was acquainted with this or that vision more or less tenable.....I cannot say that I estimate the amount of Dante's indebtedness to any one of them at any large measure.....I am led to the conclusion that there is no ground for imputing anything like deliberate plagiarism to Dante in this matter or even for assuming, to any considerable extent, a conscious reproduction. His position is simply that of one who, like all great poets, is the heir of the ages that have preceded him. The supreme artificer uses all materials that he finds ready to hand. Whatever was grotesque, horrible, or foul in the mediæval conceptions of the Unseen world, no less than what was pure, bright, transcendent in its beauty, was likely to find its way into his treasure-house of things new and old, and to be used by him in the spirit of his own, and not of a later, generation .

In a recent book above referred to, and entitled "*An Irish Precursor of Dante*"², the author adds one more to the

¹ M. Barthélemy also describes a number of visions about the other world, though not necessarily with a view to find or suggest therein the source of Dante's vision. (*Livre d'Arda Viraf*, Introduction p. XXVI et seq.)

² Dr. Plumptre's *Divine Comedy*, pp. 372-73.

³ *An Irish Precursor of Dante. A Study on the Vision of Heaven and Hell ascribed to the Eighth-century Irish Saint Adamnán, with Translation of Irish Text,* by C. A. Boswell, 1908.

several visions of the other world. He gives "The visions of Heaven and hell ascribed to the eighth-century Irish Saint Adamnan" and says, that it is one of the many visions that may have suggested to Dante the materials of his Divine Comedy. The following view of the author, expressed in the very commencement of his Introductory Chapter, is worth nothing here :

" Few, if any, of the great masterpieces of literature, even of those which bear the most unmistakable imprint of an original mind, are 'original' in the vulgar sense of being invented 'all out of the head' of the author. Most frequently they are the development and the sublimation of forms and subjects already current.....To this rule the *Commedia* of Dante, though one of the most truly original creations of the human mind, forms no exception. The main subject of the poem, the visit of a living man, in person or in vision, to the world of the dead, and his report of what he had seen and heard there, belongs to a class of world-myths.....After occupying an important place in several of the antique religions it afforded subjects to the genius of Homer, Plato, and Virgil : it was then adopted into the early Christian Church, and afterwards constituted one of the favourite subjects in the popular literatures of the Middle Ages, until, finally, Dante exhausted the great potentialities of the theme and precluded all further developments. The *Commedia* is like a mighty river formed by the confluence of several great tributaries, each of which is fed by innumerable springs and streamlets, which have their rise in religions remote and most diverse from each other, and are all tinged by the soil of the lands through which they flow."

The number of striking points of resemblance given above between the visions of Dante and that of Virāṭ leads us to add one more to the long list of visions that may have suggested to Dante some materials for his great work. The

Viraf-nameh may be one of the great "tributaries" that may have fed the river of Dante's imagination and of his great poem.

Though the two visions are different in their main features, it is possible, one may have had before him the version of the other. As Viraf's vision had preceded Dante's it is possible that the Italian poet may have taken some points of his vision from it.

**Facts showing that Florence had come into contact
with Persia.**

Countess Cesaresco thinks that Dante must have heard some report of Viraf's vision. She says: "The small work known as the Book of Ardâ Viraf is a document of priceless worth to the student of Mazdean eschatology..... Like the vision of the Seer of Patmos this work is purely religious; it attempts no criticism of life and man such as that embodied in the 'Divina Commedia' but in spite of this difference in aim, there is an astonishing resemblance between its general plan and that of the poem of Dante. Without going into this subject, I may say that I cannot feel convinced that with the geographical, astronomical, and other knowledge of the East which is believed to have reached Dante by means of conversations with merchants, pilgrims and perhaps craftsmen (for that Italian artists worked in India at an early date the Madonna-like groups in many a remote Hindu temple bear almost certain testimony), there did not come to him also some report of the travels of the Persian visitant to the next world."

There are a few facts which lead us to see that Italy—and Florence especially—had come into some contact with

¹ "The Place of Animals in Human Thought" by The Countess Cesaresco, pp. 189-190.

Persia. So Dante himself may have come into some contact with Persian traditional literature as embodied in stories.

(a) Firstly, a law of 1282 had "limited all participation in the government of the city to those who had been enrolled, in one of the seven Guilds of the greater Arts which had created its wealth." The spirit of this law was broken by people who enrolled their names merely nominally in any one of the Guilds. One of the Ordinances of Justice passed in 1292 remedied this and it enacted that "no one should be elected as Prior who was not actually carrying on business in the 'art' of his Guild." The result of this ordinance was that "when Dante resolved to take his part in public life, he had to qualify for one of these Guilds, and, as was natural in a student of natural science, he chose that of the Physicians and Apothecaries. It lies in the nature of the case that admission to that Guild implied an examination. . . . It involved, in Dante's case, an actual practice in the profession. . . . But the apothecary's business in the thirteenth century, was not confined to drugs. It included spices of all kinds, precious stones and jewels generally. . . . In all these things the Florentine apothecaries were, like those of Venice, Pisa, and Genoa, the channels of traffic between the East and West, between India and Persia on the one hand, France and England on the other."¹

It is quite possible that this contact with Persia may have brought to Dante some information about the vision of the Iranian seer.

(b) Secondly, In 1802, Dante was condemned to be an exile. During this period in his life, there was formed, between him and Immanuel ben Salomo of Rome, an intellectual friendship. This Jewish scholar "was conspicuous among

¹ Dr. Plumptre's Dante, Vol I, Introduction, pp. LXXI-III.

his fellow-Jews for his literary culture." One of his poems contained "a vision of Tophet and Eden (it is significant that the Jew does not acknowledge a Purgatory), which present so many points of resemblance to Dante's Hell and Paradise, that it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that one borrowed from the other, or probably that they compared notes, and that their borrowing was reciprocal. Immanuel is guided in his perplexity, not by Virgil, but by the prophet Daniel."¹

Now, we know that Daniel's name is variously connected with Irân. For example, it was in the palace at Shushan, on the shores of the river Karun in Persia, that he had his celebrated dream (Daniel VIII 2). Even now, a place is pointed out in Sus or Shushan to travellers as the tomb of Daniel. Ebn Haukal² refers to it as the place containing the tomb of Daniel. There is another place in Persia which claims the honour of being the death-place of Daniel. It is Susa. The Persians speak of the tomb at Shushan as that of Daniel-i-Akbar *i.e.* Daniel the Great, and of that at Susa as that of Daniel-i-Ashkhar *i.e.* the Lesser Daniel.³ Again, scholars like Dr. Adam Clarke even go to the extent of saying that Zoroaster, the prophet of Irân, was Daniel.

Thus the connection of Daniel's name with ancient Persia suggests, that the latter country and its ancient literature had some influence upon this Jewish Prophet's visions and thoughts. For example, take the case of some of the details of his dream (Daniel, Chap. II. and IV). They have their counterparts in Iranian books. Daniel explains to Nebuchadnezzar his dream of seeing an image with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thigh of brass, legs of iron, and feet of clay. He says that all the metals represented some coming kingdoms." Now, according to

¹ Ibid, Introduction p. LXXVI.

² Ibid.

³ Onsley's Oriental Geography, p. 76.

⁴ Vide my Paper on "The River Karun", in my "Asiatic Papers" p. 15.

the Pahalavi Bahman Yasht (Chap. II, 9-22), Zoroaster had a dream, in which he saw a tree with branches of the above different metals. Here also, the interpretation was, that the different metals represented some coming "kingdoms."

But, laying aside the special case of the influence of Daniel, when one thinks of the above Jewish scholar who is believed to have influenced Dante, he is reminded of the influence of the ancient Irânians upon the ancient Jews. Thus, it is just possible, that Dante was influenced, indirectly through the Jews, or directly through some original Persian sources in his plan of the Divine Comedy.

(c) Thirdly, the recently published book, "An Irish Precursor of Dante", referred to above, suggests some thoughts in the same line. Mr. Boswell says, that the Irish story of St. Adamnan's vision of Heaven and Hell may have suggested to Dante some of his thoughts of the Divine Comedy. This seems to be probable. We must bear in mind, that Ireland has another story which has its parallel in ancient Iran in a story of the Shâhnâmeh, the great epic of Persia. It is the Irish story of Cucullin and Conloch, based on the two Irish ballads, of "Conlock a Poem" and "The Lamentation of Cucullin over the body of his son Conloch", and given by Miss Brook in her "Reliques of Irish poetry". It presents a parallel to the Iranian story of Rustam and Sohrab.¹ This story has made its way even in Russia and Germany.

The very name Ireland suggests that the country was originally inhabited by a tribe of the ancient Aryans, among whom the Irânians were included. Again, Erin, the ancient name of Ireland which is used in the above-mentioned poem of Cucullin has, a close resemblance with Iran, the ancient name of Persia. As two recent writers on Persian poetry have said, "the curious will note with what assiduity the Irish

¹ Vide my Paper on "Cucullin and Conloch and Rustam and Sohrab" in my "Asiatic Papers" pp. 53-66 (Vide Journal B.B.R.A. Society Vol. XVII, pp. 317-329.)

cultivate Persian. The resemblance of the native name of Persia, Eran, to the native name of Ireland, Erin, is significant.”

While speaking of the possible influence of the Iranian version on Dante's mind, one must remember, that he has made a very favourable allusion to the Persians at one place in his poem. In the *Paradise*, while speaking of unrighteous rulers, he says, that on the Judgement day, many, who did not believe in Christianity would possibly be found nearer to God than those who merely cried “O Christ ! O Christ !”. He then adds that the Persians, whom he holds to be a type of righteous persons, would find fault with unrighteous Christian rulers. He says :

But look how many cry “O Christ, O Christ !”
 Who at the judgment shall much farther be
 From Him than some who have not known the Christ.
 Such Christians judged by Æthiops we shall see.
 Then, when the two bands take their separate way,
 One rich, one poor for all eternity,
 What to your kings might not your Persians say,
 When they shall see that volume open wide
 In which their vile deeds stand in full array ?

(*Paradise*, Canto XIX ll.106-114).

The compliment paid here to the Persians shows that Dante knew something about them. Dr. Plumptre raises a question in a note, whether Dante was here thinking of the ancient Persians or the modern, “of whom, as of Zenghis Khan, the monarch of Cathay, he may have heard through Marco Polo.” The life and work of a man like Changiz Khan must not have presented a favourable feature to Dante. So, it is the ancient Persians to whom he refers. Among these ancient rulers of Persia, Noshirwân (Chosroes I) was, and is still

(1) “The Persian Poets” by Messrs. Dole and Walker. Introduction p. X.

well-known among all Oriental nations, as Noshirwân the just. Mahomed, the prophet, is said to have taken pride in being born in the reign of this just ruler. Rulers like him may have presented Dante types of righteous persons.

The Sources of the Legends of the Vision of the other world in the Divine Comedy of Dante. Zoroastrianism as one of the Sources.

Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco in her interesting book entitled "The Place of Animals in Human Thought referring to the source of Dante's Divine Comedy, says : "I cannot feel convinced that with the geographical, astronomical and other knowledge of the East which is believed to have reached Dante by means of conversations with merchants, pilgrims and perhaps craftsmen. . . . there did not come to him also some report of the travels of the Persian visitant to the next world".

Mr. C. S. Boswell's recent interesting book, "An Irish Precursor of Dante," has entered deeper into the subject of the sources of Dante's Divine Comedy. Among several sources, to which the Legend of the Vision of the next world can be traced, he mentions the Irânian tradition and considers Zoroastrianism as forming a principal part of that tradition. This paper is intended to take a brief notice of that portion of Mr. Boswell's work, which refers, among the several traditions of the Legend, to the Classical tradition and to the Eastern tradition and especially to the Zoroastrian tradition.

As Mr. Boswell says, "The main subject of the poem (*Commedia* of Dante), the visit of a living man, in person or in vision, to the world of the dead, and his report of what he had seen and heard there, belongs to a class of world-myths than which few are more widely distributed in place or time, and none have been more fortunate in the place won for them by the masters of literature. After occupy-

ing an important place in several of the antique religions it afforded subjects to the genius of Homer, Plato, and Virgil ; it was then adopted into the early Christian Church, and afterwards constituted one of the favourite subjects in the popular literature of the Middle Ages, until, finally, Dante exhausted the great potentialities of the theme, and precluded all further developments.

"The *Commedia* is like a mighty river formed by the confluence of several great tributaries, each of which is fed by innumerable springs and streamlets, which have their rise in regions remote and most diverse from each other, and are all tinged by the soil of the lands through which they flow."¹

The Legend of the Vision of the other world, as it has come down to us, can claim a great antiquity, and "may be traced back along several widely divergent lines"² which can be grouped under the following heads:—

1. The Classical Tradition.

2. The Eastern Tradition.

3. The Ecclesiastical Tradition, which is the result of "the fusion in the early Christian Church of Hellenic and Oriental schools of thought."³ In other words, the Ecclesiastical tradition arises from the first two traditions.

4. The Irish Tradition, which is not an "independent growth," but a "new departure." The Ecclesiastical Tradition, when carried to Ireland, embodied some of the "cognate ideas" prevalent in (a) the local native mythology of the country and (b) in the romantic literature, and thus "acquired a fresh development".⁴ Ireland, being the intellectual centre of Western Europe in the later Middle Ages, influenced "the mediæval theories of the Otherworld until the revival of the classical learning."

¹ "An Irish Precursor of Dante", by C. S. Boswell, p. 1.

² Ibid, p. 48. ³ Ibid. ⁴ Ibid.

We thus see, that, though Mr. Boswell has grouped the sources or the divergent lines, along which the Legend of the Vision of the other world can be traced, into four heads, the principal heads are the first two, *viz.* 1 The Classical Tradition and 2 The Eastern Tradition. The second two can be traced to the first two. We will briefly review these two traditions as traced by Mr. Boswell.

1.—The Classical Tradition.

"The fundamental conception, a visit paid to the Other-world by a living man, appears in many of the Greek myths."¹ The following are some of the myths' :—

- (a) The Journey to Hades, of Demeter in the course of her search after her daughter Persephone, stolen away by Pluto.
- (b) The Journey of Orpheus in quest of Eurydice.
- (c) The Journey of Theseus and Peirithoos in their attempt to abduct Persephone.
- (d) The Journey of Herakles.
- (e) The Journey of Castor
- (f) The Journey of Pollux

All these journeys were of the time of "the myth-making age". When this age passed away, and when an "age of creative imagination" gave place to an age of literary culture, the myths or legends "passed into the domain of literature pure and simple". The legend was thus seen in a literary garb in Homer's *Odyssey*, in the 11th book of which, Odysseus is represented as visiting the other world. This book seems to

¹ Ibid.

have suggested to Virgil, the visit of Æneas to Hades as described in the sixth book of his *Æneid*.

The legend of the Vision, in its very old stage, did not contain the religious element. It continued as a mere myth. It was not made the "vehicle of instruction or edification."¹ It had "little of eschatological or ethical significance".² But, latterly, there arose "another school of Hellenic thought," in which the vision legend "received fuller development,"³ i.e. began to have the religious element of instruction and edification.

The later stage of Greek philosophy, known as "Neoplatonising tendency in Greek philosophy," had "the tendency to regard the old myths, as a repository of the 'Wisdom of the ancients', and to disengage from the husk of fable the moral and scientific truths which it was supposed to contain. In so doing, the philosophic schools were not merely attempting to read their own notions into the traditions of antiquity, but were also, to some extent, endeavouring to develop germs which already existed in the best and most serious thought of their own and earlier times. This side of the Hellenic religion would appear to have existed in its purest and most highly developed form in the Mysteries, especially those practised at Eleusis, and at other places in which the Eleusinian rites prevailed."⁴

Laying aside many debated and unsettled questions about the origin, the nature of instruction &c. of these Greek mysteries, one can admit "the significance of the mysteries to the spiritual life of Greece at the time of their highest development."⁵

How the mysteries led to the spiritual life can be summarised as follows :—

¹ Ibid p. 49. ² Ibid. ³ Ibid p. 51.

⁴ Ibid. p. 51. ⁵ Ibid, p. 52.

The Greeks, from very remote times, practised certain rites connected with agriculture in honour of Demeter.¹ These rites meant a propitiation of the higher unseen powers presiding over agriculture, and were held to ameliorate the condition of the art. They were also held to confer certain privileges upon the participants, who could only obtain access thereto by a secret initiation. The ideas of life, growth and death are presented in agriculture. The seed takes life, and becomes a plant. It grows and dies. These ideas suggested similar ideas in the case of man—birth, growth and death. So, the same rites, which propitiated the unseen powers and led to their help in ameliorating the condition of the crop, were believed to be efficacious in propitiating the powers for the good of a

¹ Demeter literally meant "mother-earth". She was a goddess representing the earth and its productions. In the same spirit in which she is called mother-earth, the "air" is called "Father" by Lucretius. *Æther* is the God presiding over air. All vegetables are the results of the union between these elements, or between the two gods representing them, viz Demeter and *Æther*. In this sense, Demeter is said to be the wife of *Æther*. Another name of Demeter is *Ceres*, a word, which, from the root *c (e) creare, create*, to create &c. also means "a producer."

Demeter, is also, at times, spoken of, as the wife of Bacchus. In Greek and Roman mythology, there are certain divinities or gods which are "duplicate divinities". They are male and female. There are also some deities of doubtful sex. Now Bacchus is the sun-god. Demeter is not only the goddess of the earth, and as such, the wife of *Æther*, but also the goddess of moon, and as such, the wife of Bacchus, the god of the sun. The sun being the producer of wine among other things, Bacchus, the sun-god, was also the God of wine. The bad use of wine brought this god to disrepute and he became the God of Hell as well. So, his wife, Demeter, became also the queen of the lower world. Pluto, was also the God of Hell. Demeter, being the wife of Bacchus, one of the gods of Hell, she was taken to be the wife of Pluto also, who also was a god of Hell. Pluto, as god of Hell, was also known as *Axiokersos*. So Demeter, as his wife, was also, at times, called *Axiokersa* (the wife of *Axiokersos*). The word *Axiokersa*, also like *Ceres*, meant "producer" or creator. The two deities, Demeter and Bacchus, were worshipped at Eleusis with particular solemnities and mysteries. Demeter is represented, in some ancient monuments, as carrying a basket of corn on her head.

man's soul. Then the questioning came as to the future of the soul, and the same rites were believed to be efficacious for the soul of the good hereafter.

Thus, the mystic schools and their mystic rites had a good deal to do with the souls of men. Latterly, "as the doctrine of the effect of conduct upon the future life gained ground, this side of the question likewise came within the purview of the mystical schools, and an ethical as well as a theurgic efficacy was ascribed to the initiation rite."¹

"It is in connection with the mysteries, as representing the moral and spiritual side of the Greek religion, whencesoever derived, that the Vision legend becomes impressed with an epedeictic character and develops those elements which had barely existed in germ in the popular mythology."²

Plato then made the legend a vehicle of religious instruction. Aristophanes and Plutarch followed suit. But Virgil, who lived about a century before Plutarch, was one, who made a "contribution of real importance to the development of the Vision legend in literature."³ "Virgil saturated with the Hellenic culture, while remaining intensely Roman in his political views and national sentiment, remains free from any tincture of Oriental ideas."⁴ He "pressed into his services ideas, beliefs, and speculations drawn alike from the popular creeds and traditions, and from the philosophers of his own and earlier times."⁵ He was regarded "as at once the epitome and the consummation of the Wisdom of the Ancients, and as, moreover, the divinely inspired herald of the coming transition from Paganism to Christianity."⁶ This accounts for why Dante makes Virgil his guide in his vision of the Divine Comedy.

¹ Ibid, Boswell's Irish Precursor of Dante p. 53.

² Ibid, p. 64.

³ Ibid. p. 67.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid, p. 56,

⁶ Ibid, p. 66.

2. The Eastern Tradition.

We saw above, how the classical tradition about the Legend of the Vision had developed, from very early times upto the time of Virgil, whom Dante admired and followed to a great extent. But Dante did not remain satisfied with the classical tradition as evolved, embodied and finally developed in the work of Virgil. To be as complete as possible in his narration he used "the materials preserved in Christian legend and popular tradition."

Now, the materials of the Christian legend of the early Christian church were borrowed from two sources.

(1) The Hellenistic school or the Greek tradition referred to above as classic tradition.

(2) The Earlier Dispensation or the Hebrew Sources.

As to the first source, we saw, how the Greek tradition had gradually developed from premature myths into full grown instructive religious moral system, as embodied in the works of Virgil. So, Virgil was claimed by the early Christian writers, as one of the old Pagan seers or prophets, who had a hand in the preparation or in the moulding of the materials of the Gospel.

2. As to the second source of the Christian legend of the Otherworld, viz. the Jewish Church, one must bear in mind that, at the time of the birth of Christ, it was not what it was at first in its early state. It had its own evolution. It borrowed and added to itself elements from various Oriental sources. The different Oriental Sources, that went to make up, what Mr. Boswell calls, the Oriental Tradition, which affected Judaism, were principally the following :—

A. The Chaldæan.

B. The Zoroastrian.

C. The Egyptian.

We will speak of these sources.

^a Boswell, *Ibid* p. 68.

A. The Chaldean Tradition.

There is no institution, however good, that has not some dark spots in the course of its history. The Jewish nation had its own golden age, the age of its complete freedom from foreign thralldom and foreign influence. But the dark spot in that golden age, was this that it was stunted in the sphere of broad and brilliant speculations,—and among them, the speculations about life in the other world. Then came its dark age, when it fell into thralldom and captivity. But that captivity brought for it a little brighter intellectual scope. It brought, for its acceptance or rather for assimilation, the richer speculations, the richer mythology of the conquering nations. The influences of conquering nations “combined to produce a more spiritual type of religion, and a more elaborate eschatology than had originally entered into the national faith of Israël.”¹

In tracing the source of these foreign influences, one has to go to the mythology of the earlier Accadian race, which lent a good deal to the early Assyrians. Ishtar, the goddess of the Assyrians, is said to have descended into Hades to search for the water of life. Their national hero, Gisdubar, also had gone there to seek advice from his departed ancestors. As in the case of the Irish vision of St. Adamnan, embodied in *Fis Adámnain*, the abodes of the dead had seven gates guarded by seven porters. Gisdubar was not admitted into the Chaldean Elysium or Heaven, as he was under the curse of divine wrath. There is no clear question of reward for the good or punishment for the bad. If there is any difference, it is the aristocratic difference of the great and the small. “The whole Chaldean theory of the future life is very rudimentary, notwithstanding the great proficiency in several departments of culture to which the Accadian and Assyrian races had attained”.² So far, the

¹ Ibid p. 68.

² Ibid p. 70.

Hebrews, who lived in Assyria and Babylon, had not much chance of assimilating the richer speculations of eschatology from their conquerors or rulers, because the latter themselves had very few to give.

B. The Zoroastrian Tradition.

The Zoroastrian tradition about the Otherworld, began to influence the Jews to a greater extent when Assyria and Babylon were conquered by the Medes. With this conquest, the Jews came under the rule of the Medes, and with that rule, under the influence of Zoroastrianism, whose eschatology was richer and more elaborate than that of the Semitic or pre-semitic races. "The Avesta inculcated an ethic of high morality, and taught a very systematic theory of rewards and punishments in the future life. The experiences of the soul after death are described with great minuteness and copiousness of detail."¹

In his estimate of a "systematic theory" about morals, Mr. Boswell's view is anticipated by Mon. Harlez who thus speaks on the subject: "*La religion mazdéenne se distingue de toutes les autres religions antiques en ce qu'elle a une morale systématisée et fondée sur des principes philosophiques.*"² Similarly, Dr. Geiger says: "Nowhere, I think, does the belief in the future life after death stand out more prominently, nowhere are the ideas respecting it expressed more decidedly and carried out in all their details more fully, than among the Avesta people. Here the doctrine of immortality and of compensating justice in the next world forms a fundamental dogma of the whole system. Without it, the Zoroastrian religion is in fact unintelligible."³

¹ Ibid p. 71.

² "*Avesta, Livre Sacré du Zoroastrisme*", par C. de Harlez. Introduction Chap. XII p. 150.

³ *Civilization of The Eastern Iranians*. Eastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana's Translation, Vol. I, p. 98.

"The Persian religion, in the stage at which it is preserved in the Avesta, spiritualised much of the primitive Aryan mythology, allegorising many of its deities into personifications of good and evil principles and qualities."¹

The Irânians, who now ruled over the Jews, gave to them their richer ideas of eschatology, together with some other ideas. An attempt has been made, by the late Dr. Darmesteter, to show, that the Avesta itself was indebted to Hellenic influences,² especially to the influence of the Neo-platonists, but his "theory is incompatible with the existence in the earlier form of the Avestan religion, of elements which may reasonably be presumed to have affected the development of our legend (*i. e.* the legend of the Vision of the other world,) through Hebrew channels".³

Again Darmesteter himself admits that the Vendidad was pre-Alexandrian "and it is precisely the Vendidad⁴ that contains the greater part, though not all, of the doctrines concerning the Otherworld⁵".

So, "we are thus warranted in assuming, that the Persians had developed a tolerably complete theory of the other world, and of the rewards and punishments there meted out in recompense for man's conduct in this life, at a date early enough to influence Hebrew thought, before either nation had come under Hellenic influences." "In this connection, it should also be noted that the Avestan doctrine of the Other-world gives no place to the theory of Rebirth, which is a principal article of the Platonic and Pythagorean schools, and might have been expected to occupy a prominent place

1 Boswell's Irish Precursor of Dante p. 75.

2 Vide my paper on "The Antiquity of the Avesta" Journal B. B. R. Asiatic Society, Vol. XIX pp. 263-287.

3 Boswell's Irish Precursor of Dante p. 78.

4 Vendidad, Chap. XIX.

5 Boswell's Irish Precursor of Dante, p. 80.

in the Zoroastrian eschatology, had this been moulded to any great extent by Greek philosophy. In holding the finality of man's lot after death, the Persian doctrine agrees with that of the Jews, and apparently, of the Chaldeans.¹"

Again "the district occupied by the Jews during the captivity had been a focus of the religion of Chaldaea, both in the Accado-Sumerian and in the Semitic periods, and afterwards became an important part of the Persian empire. The canonical books and the Apocrypha of the Old Testament alike prove that close relations subsisted between the Jews and both their Persian and Assyrian rulers, and exhibit traces of the influence exercised by the latter upon the Jewish writers. Thus it appears no rash assumption, that it is to these sources we must ascribe the substance, at least, of those doctrines enunciated by the later Jewish writers, for which there is no authority in the earlier writings of their nation, but which correspond to ideas already existing among nations with which they lived in close and intimate contact.

..... The Vision legend receives no development later than the very primitive legends of Ishtar and Gisdubar. Nevertheless, it is in the Chaldean and Persian religions that we find many of the notions and images which furnish material to Jewish and Christian authors alike, when, under Hellenistic influences, they took up the Vision legend as a vehicle of instruction. Many of these conceptions continued to subsist in all subsequent versions of the legend, even in its later forms."²

I think, that even in the creation of a part of the Classical Tradition, above referred to, the Zoroastrian tradition may have had some influence. The association of the ideas of life, growth and death—both in the agriculture of the country and in the life of man—as suggested above by Mr. Boswell, is seen in the *Avesta* of the Zoroastrians; and as

1 Ibid, p. 80. 2 Ibid, pp. 82-83.

the Avesta was not without its influence upon Greek classical thought, it was likely that the classical tradition was influenced by it.

Zoroaster greatly recommended agriculture. Gibbon speaks of the words of this recommendation as "a wise and benevolent maxim."¹ The third chapter of the Vendidad is replete with these maxims of recommendation. The land which is cultivated is represented as rejoicing for the crop that it bears.² The man who cultivates land rejoices the earth.³ The land that is cultivated rejoices like a woman who bears children and *vice versa*.⁴ The land so cultivated blesses its owner.⁵ Uncultivated land curses its owner. The spread of cultivation is as good as that of religion.⁶ It adds to the splendour of that religion. The Daêvas *i. e.*, demons or the personalities of all evil influences, physical mental or spiritual, shudder and tremble at the spread of agriculture.⁷ Industry, as typified by agriculturè, leads a man's soul to Heaven. The Gahmbârs, which are the season festivals, are principally connected with agriculture. The observation of their rites and ceremonies is a sacred duty leading one's soul to Heaven.

It seems likely, that these Zoroastrian notions had some influence upon Greek thought. Both, during pre-Alexandrian and post-Alexandrian times, Persia had some influence over Greek thought. According to Persian tradition, on the fall of Persia, at the hand of Alexander the Great, the Greeks translated into their language some of the Persian books which fell into their hands. These Greek translations of Iranian books may have influenced the classical Greek tradition about the Legend of the Vision of the world.

The following conceptions in Adamnan's Irish Vision, taken from the Ecclesiastical Tradition, do not exist in the

¹ The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. VIII, Vol. I (1845) p. 120.

² Vendidad III. 4.

³ Ibid III, 23.

⁴ Ibid. 24.25.

⁵ Ibid, 27.

⁶ Ibid, 28.29.

⁷ Ibid 32.

Classical Tradition, but do exist in the Oriental Tradition. This fact shows that they were taken by the Early Christian Church (and from it by St. Adamnan) from the Oriental Tradition and not from the Classical Tradition.

1. The seven fold divisions of the Heavens, the rudiments of which existed in the earliest Chaldæan legends. The Jewish and Christian writers adopted it and the Scholastic divines sanctioned it. The number 7 was very significant among the ancients, perhaps because the primitive astronomers knew only of the seven planets.

2. The association of the idea of the Tree of life with that of the Water of Life. The idea of the Tree of Life is common to the Aryans, Semitics and Turânians. So, perhaps it may be taken that the Hebrews were not indebted to the Chaldeans or Persians for it. But the association of the idea of the Water of Life with it, is more Chaldean than Scriptural. So, the Jews may have taken it during the Captivity from the Chaldeans. Not only the oral and written tradition of the latter, but also their pictorial art must have given that idea to the Jews.

Again, the Tree of Life is associated with a mystical bird in Christian legend, as in the case of Adamnan's vision. This bird approaches "closely to the Karshipta, the sacred bird of the Persians. . . . which brought Avesta to the Var of Yima."

3. The World sea. The Crystal Sea in the Christian literature, especially in the book of Revelation,¹ had perhaps its origin in the World Sea at the foot of the Holy Fountain in the Avestan Paradise.

4. "The temporary provision for the souls of those mingled characters who are not yet fitted for an eternity of either bliss or bale." This temporary provision, referred to

¹ "Revelation XV, 2 and cf. *Fis Adamnain*, Ch. 11.

by early Hebrew and Christian writers and by Fís Adamnain, corresponds to that of the Hamestagehân among the Persians.

5. The idea of a guardian angel accompanying each individual soul. The Jewish and Christian divines assign a Guardian angel to each soul. Such a guardian angel accompanied St. Adamnan in his heavenly journey. This guardian angel reminds one of the Zoroustrian Fravashi or Farohar.

C. The Egyptian Tradition.

Now, we come to the Egyptian tradition, the third branch of the Oriental Tradition, which influenced Hebrewism, and through it, what Mr. Boswell terms, the Ecclesiastical Tradition of the Early Christian Church, which, in its turn, influenced both Dante and Adamnan, the latter, in his turn again influencing the former with his own special Irish notions.

Alexandria in Egypt was naturally the centre of Egyptian learning. But, though surrounded by the learned of the country, it had, as it were, become the bazaar of the intellectual articles of trade of many countries especially the Greeks, Romans and Persians. It was at one time ruled by the Achemenian Persians. The Alexandrian school has been considered by some to be more Greek in its main features than Egyptian. But, without entering into an inquiry about this matter, one can say that it had a strong element specially Egyptian. It can not be otherwise. When even some time before its foundation by the Ptolemies, it was usual, or rather a fashion, to trace the origin of some notions specially Greek to Egypt, the land of ancient wisdom, how can it be said that the Alexandrian or Egyptian school was a school without the Alexandrian and Egyptian element in it. The Egyptians had their own eschatalogy, some of the elements of which were common with the ancient Persians.¹

¹ Vide my paper on "The Belief of the ancient Egyptians and Persians about the Future of the soul," in my "Asiatic Papers" pp. 137-145.

Now, Alexandria had become, as Mr. Boswell says, a centre *par excellence* of Jewish learning in the West. There was a cultured Jewish community there. So, their contact with the religion of the Egyptians in the midst of its very home could not remain without some influence. There were several points in which the eschatology of the Hebrews resembled that of the Egyptians, who possibly may have given something to those learned settlers. The following is a list of these:—

- (a) The rivers and atmospheres of fire through which the soul has to pass.
 - (b) The assaults of demons and monsters.
 - (c) The destiny that all souls whether good or bad have to go through the above trials, though the good pass easily without any suffering.
 - (d) The Threefold division of the souls into the good, the bad and those of the mixed character.
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AZIDAHĀKA (ZOHĀK) OF THE AVESTA

AND

SATAN OF DANTE.

In two of my previous papers¹—one prepared for the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society and the other prepared for the Dante Society of England—I have shown the various points of similarity between the Virāf-nāmeh of Ardāi Virāf and the Divine Comedy of Dante. In my third paper, entitled “An Irānian Precursor of Dante and an Irish Precursor of Dante,” read before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,² I have entered into the question of the Origin of the Irānian and Irish versions. In my paper, entitled “Zoroastrianism in Dante,” published in the Indian Review of Madras,³ I have gone a little deeper into the question of the origin.

In this short paper, I propose pointing out a few striking points of resemblance between the Satan of Dante and the Azi Dahāk of the Avesta, whose eschatology seems to have suggested some points to Dante.

1 (a) The Divine Comedy of Dante and the Virāf-nāmeh of Ardāi Virāf (Journal B. B. R. Asiatic Society, Vol. XVIII, pp. 192-205)
Vide, “my Asiatic Papers, pp. 31-44)

(b) “An Irānian Precursor of Dante.”

2 Journal, Vol. XXIII, No. LXVI, pp. 189-216.

3 The Coronation Number Vol. XII (1911). No. 11 and 12, pp. 931-35.

1. The Avesta speaks of Azi Dahâka as three-mouth-
ed, ⁶ three-headed, and six-eyed.

(အညွှန်း-ပုဒ်နှင့် အရည်အသွေး ဘဝ အသွေး ဘဝ)^၁

Dante also represents Satan as three-faced, three-headed and six-eyed. We find this in the following lines of the *Inferno*, as translated by Cary.²

"Oh, what a sight !

How passing strange it seem'd, when I did spy
Upon his head three faces : one in front
Of hue vermilion, the other two with this
Midway each shoulder join'd and at the crest ;
The right 'twixt wan and yellow seem'd; the left
To look on, such as come from whence old Nile
Stoops to the lowlands. Under each shot forth
Two mighty wings, enormous as became
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw
Outstretch'd on the wide sea. No plumes had they,
But were in texture like a bat; and these
He flapp'd i'th'air, that from him issued still
Three winds, where with Cocytus to its depth
Was frozen. At six eyes he wept : the tears
Adown three chins distill'd with body foam".

For the sake of comparison, I give below, Dr. Plumptre's translation also.

“ O how it seemed to me a marvel dread
When on one head I saw a *threefold face* !
One looked in front, and that was fiery red ;
The other twain close by it held their place,
Above the middle of each shoulder-blade,
And rose and joined beneath the crest's embrace.

1 Yaçna IX (Haoma Yasht), 8 Vide also, Yasht V (Aban) 29, 34; Yasht IX (Ishah), 14; Yasht XIX (Zamyâd), 47—50.

2 The Vision of Hell by Dante Alighieri, translated by the Rev. Henry Francis Cary (1866), pp. 18)–81. Hell, Canto XXXIV ll. 35–50.

The right a tint of yellowish-white displayed :
 The left was such to look on as are those
 There where Nile's waters have an outlet made.
Beneath each head two out spread wings arose,
 Large, as befitted such a bird as that ;
 No ship at sea such monstrous canvass shows ;
 No feathers had they, but like these of bat
 Their fashion was, and so the pinions tossed
 That three strong blasts went forth from where he sat ;
 By them Cocytus was all bound in frost.
 With his *six eyes* he weeps ; o'er *threefold chin*.
 The rain of tears and bloody drivel crossed,
 And with the teeth each misshaped mouth within,
 In flax-mill wise, he crunched a sinner's frame,
 So that three souls he tortured for their sin.

(The *Commedia* and *Canzoniere* of Dante Alighieri, by Dr. Plumptre, Vol. I, p. 174. Hell Canto, XXXIV ll. 37-57)

The three heads of Dante's Satân represented Judas, Brutus and Cassius.

“ That upper spirit,
 Who hath worst punishment, so spake my guide,
 ‘ Is Judas, he that has his head within
 And plies the feet without. Of th’ other two,
 Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw
 Who hangs, is Brutus: lo ! how he doth writhe
 And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that appears
 So large of limb.’ ”¹

2. These three—Judas, Brutus and Cassius—were murderers.

Thus, Satân embodied in himself, as it were, three murderers. Azi Dahâka also had committed three murders. The first was that of his own father, Mardâs;² the second that of Jam-

1 Cary's translation, p. 181. Hell, Canto XXXIV, ll. 56-63

2 Shah-nâmeh. Vuller's, text, Vol. 1, pp. 28-30.

shed (Yima Khshaêta of the Avesta),¹ the lawful ruler of Irân; and the third that of Âbtin, the father of Faredun.²

Again, in the case of the above two sets of murderers—the Irânian and Dantaic—we find some points of similarity.

3. The first person murdered by the Azi Dahâka of the Avesta was his own father, Mardâs. Judas, represented by the first head of Dante's Satan, was also guilty of his father's murder.

4. The second person murdered by Azi Dahâka was Jamshed, the lawful ruler of Irân. Brutus, represented by the second head of Dante's Satan, was guilty of the murder of Cæsar, the lawful ruler of Rome.

5. Like the Satan of Dante, the Azi Dahâka of the Avesta also is still living, according to the Iranian traditions, as noted in Pahlavi, Pazend and Persian books, on a part of the Demâvand Kôh (Mount Dêmâvand), known as Shirkhân.

6. Dante represents Satan as shooting forth "two mighty wings". Irânian books represent Azi Dahâka, as shooting forth two snakes from his shoulders. The above named three persons, who are represented in the three heads of Satan, have their heads "within" or "under." In the case of the two serpents on the shoulder of Azi Dahâka also, the root or source, as it were, of their heads is within or under his shoulders. Azi Dahâka cuts off the heads but they grow back again.

7. Satan is spoken of by Dante, as "the first adulterer proud."³ Again, it is said of Judas, who is represented by one of his three heads, that "before he was born his mother Cyborea had a dream that he was destined to murder his

1 *Sûsh-namêh* pp. 33-34. Vide *Bundehesh*, chap XXXI, 5; and *Yasht* XIX, 46.

2 *Ibid.* pp. 40-41.

3 *Cary's Translation*, p. 34. *Hell*, Canto VII, l, 12.

father, commit incest with his mother, and sell his God.¹ According to old Iranian books, all this was true of Azi Dahâka also. He had, not only murdered his father, but had committed, incest with his mother.²

8. The Christian Ecclesiastical Tradition, which has supplied most of the materials to Dante, has represented Satan as originally being good and virtuous. The same is the case with Azi Dahâka (Zohâk). Firdousi says that, at first, he was a good pious man, but was led to bad ways by the temptations of Âhriman, who first appeared before him in the shape of a cook, and led him astray by first winning his heart by preparing delicious dishes for him.

9. Satan is represented by Dante as a serpent-tempter.³ In the case of Azi Dahâka, we find that he also is represented by the later Iranian writers, as having two serpents on his shoulders. Not only that, but the very first word of his name, viz. Azi, means in the Avesta, a serpent. The modern Persian word *âzlahû* for a snake is itself a later corrupted form of Azi Dahâka.

Though there are so many points of similarity between Satan, the Danteic Ahriman, and Azi Dahâka, Azi Dahâka is a person different from Satan or Ahriman, who, according to the Iranian books, presented himself before Azi Dahâka as an arch-tempter.

1 Encyclopædia Britannica, Vol. XIII. Vide the word Judas.

2 The Dâlistân-i-Dini, LXXVIII. 2; S. B. E., Vol XVIII, p. 228.

3 Purgatory. Canto VIII, ll. 98—99.

ZOROASTRIANISM. ITS PURITANIC INFLUENCE ON THE OLD WORLD.

I

INTRODUCTION

The ancient Persians, as the Puritans of the old World. While speaking of Ptolemy I, otherwise known as Ptolemy Soter or the Saviour, who is reported to have achieved with success the feat of "making a new deity" in Egypt, out of the several deities worshipped there,—a feat, in which Akbar, later on, failed in India,—Rev. Charles Kingsley says: "The Old Egyptian gods had grown in his dominions very unfashionable, under the summary iconoclasm to which they had been subjected by the Monotheist Persians—the Puritans of the Old World, as they have been called." (1)

Their efforts in the West and in the East. What the ancient Persians did in the West, in Egypt, they also did in the East, on the borderland of India, though in a different way. What they did in Egypt, later on, by conquest, they did on the borderland of India, much earlier, by a kind of schism, a kind of struggling separation, half persuasive and half fighting. They, at one time, lived in a common land with the ancestors of the ancient Hindus and worshipped a common god, the God of the Indo-Iranian religion. They then separated, the cause of separation being their puritanic tendencies, their efforts to purify religious notions. The object of this paper is to show in which lines their efforts lay. In our treatment of the subject under its different parts, we will first speak of the efforts in the East, and then of those in the West, because the former were earlier and were on a grander scale which brought about a separation from an original common stock.

II

THE INDO-IRANIAN RELIGION.

Its two principal
notions. Latent
Monotheism and
Unconscious
Dualism.

First of all, we will briefly see what the Indo-Irânian religion, common to the ancient Hindus and the ancient Irânians, the ancestors of the modern Parsees, was. We will here describe it briefly in the words of the late Prof. Darmesteter :—

“There were two general ideas at the bottom of the Indo-Iranian religion ; first, that there is a law in nature, and secondly, that there is a war in nature.

“There is a law in nature, because everything goes on in a serene and mighty order. Days after days, seasons after seasons, years after years come and come again ; there is a marvellous friendship between the sun and the moon, the dawn has never missed its appointed time and place, and the stars that shine in the night know where to go when the day is breaking. There is a God who fixed that never-failing law, and on whom it rests for ever.”

“There is a war in nature, because it contains powers that work for good and powers that work for evil : there are such beings as benefit man, and such beings as injure him : there are gods and fiends.....

“There were, therefore, in the Indo-Irânian religion a latent monotheism and an unconscious dualism.”

The Aryan forefathers of the writers of the Indian Vedas

A few details of the common elements among the Indo-Iranians and of the Iranian Avesta lived, at one time, in a country beyond the borders of modern India and modern Persia. They

1 Vide the 44th Chapter of the Yaçna for the Iranian teaching of this kind.

2 S. B. E. Vol. IV. (1880). Introduction, p. LVII.

spoke there the same language and followed the same religion. As pointed out in some details by Dr. Haug,¹ there are several facts that show their common belief.

1. Common names of Divine Beings.
2. Common names of Heroes and their common Legends.
3. Common sacrificial Rites.
4. Common Religious Observances.
5. Common Domestic Rites.
6. Common Cosmographical opinions.

At first, when they had a common religion, they had the same common names of their Divine Beings. But, latterly, when a schism began, one section of the Indo-Irânian stock began to give separate names to their own deities and to give a bad signification to the names continued to be used by the other section. Thus, we have two classes of names of the common Indo-Irânian Divine Beings.

I. One, whose names carried a bad signification among one of the two sections.

II. The second, whose names continued to carry the previous good signification.

I. Among the first class fall the following names :

1. Ahura is the name of the God among the ancient Irânians. It occurs both alone and also as a part of the more frequently used name Ahura Mazda. In its Sanskritized form as Asura, it is also used in the older parts of the Rîgveda Samhitâ for the higher Vedic gods like Varuna, Agni, Savitri and Shiva. From the old Aryan root *ah* or *as* (Avêsta *ah*, Sanskrit *as*, Lat. *esse*, Fr. *être*, Persian *hastan*) to be, to exit, to breathe, it means the life-giver,

¹ Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsees, (2nd Edition), pp. 267—85.

the ever-existing. But, latterly, the word began to have a bad signification among the Indian Aryans.

2. Indra, the chief god of the Indo-Aryans, presiding over thunder, light, war and Soma drink, became a demon (Daêva) in the Vendidad (XIX, 43) of the Iranians.

3. Sâurva, found as one of Shiva's name (Sharva) is the Saurva Daêva of the Vendidad (XIX, 43).

4. The Nâsatya of the Vedas is the Nâonghaithya of the Vendidad (XIX, 43).

II. In the class of names, that have continued to be used in a good sense by both the branches of the Indo-Iranian religion, we find the following :—

1. The Vedic Mitra,¹ the ruler of the heavens, is Avestic Mithra, the god of Light.

2. The Aryaman of the Rîgveda² is the Airyaman of the Avesta.³ In both, he presides over marriage.

3. The Armati⁴ of the Vedas is the Ârmaiti⁵ of the Avesta. In both, she presides over Devotion and over the Earth.

4. The Narâshansa of the Vedas is the Nairyosangha of the Avesta. In both, he is connected with Agni or Âtar *i.e.* Fire, and is a messenger of God.

5. The Vedic Vâyu is also the Avestaic Vayu presiding over wind.

¹ Rîgveda Bk. I, Hymn CXXXVI, 2. Griffith's Translation (1889) Vol. I. p. 243. ² Ibid. ³ Yaçna LIV.

⁴ Rîgveda, Bk. VII, Hymn XXIV, 21. Griffith Vol. III p. 48.

⁵ For a detailed description of these proper names, vide my "Dictionary of Avestaic proper names."

6. The Vedic Vritrahâ, *i.e.* one who strikes the Vritra or demon, is the Avestaic Verethraghna (Behrâm) *i.e.* one who strikes the enemy (verethra).

The number of the Divine Beings mentioned in both the Vedas and the Avesta, is thirty-three.

We find a similarity in the names, and, to a certain extent, even in the characteristics of a number of personages of the Vedas and of the Avesta, with this difference, that, while in the Avesta, they preserve their traits and characteristics as men and are treated as men, in the Vedas they are extolled to the position of gods.¹ Herein, we find the Puritanic influence of the Irânians to preserve the original signification of names and ideas. Among these names of heroes, we find the following:—

1. Yama of the Vedas and Yima of the Avesta. One is the son of Vivasvat, the other of Vivanghvat. Both have, in their original idea, something to do with a region of bliss.

2. The Trita of the Vedas is the Thritha of the Avesta. Both are physicians.

3. The Vedic Traitana is the Avestaic Thraëtaona (Faridun). One is the son of, or belongs to the clan of, Âptya. The other also is the son of Âthwya. Both had a hand in smiting a despot, a giant in the case of the Indians, Zohâk in the case of the Iranians.

4. The Kâvya Ushanas of the Indians is the Kavi Usadhana (Kâus) of the Iranians. Both are saintly persons.

Dr. Haug has pointed out a number of sacrificial rites,²

¹ Vide my "Glimpse into the Work of the B. B. Royal Asiatic Society, during the last 100 years from a Parsee point of view." pp. 43, 49.

² Vide my Paper on "अवस्तानी होमतुं वर्धुन, वेदना सोमनी सर-आमश्नी साधे" (Haoma in the Avesta) in my Book "જમશેદ હોમ અને આતશ"

religious observances, domestic rites and cosmographical opinions in both the branches of the Indo-Iranian religion, wherein we find a good deal of similarity. He has also enumerated several other facts which point out traces of a common origin, but we need not enter into them here.

III

• THE SCHISM.

These were then the principal elements of the Indo-Irânian religion common to the forefathers of the ancient Hindus and those of the ancient Irânians. Then, there came in a time, when the Indo-Irânians began to part, in the matter of their progress of thought. The ancestors of the ancient Irânians saw, that among a section of their brethren, the abovementioned two notions, *viz.*, (1) the latent monotheism and (2) the unconscious dualism, slowly began to disappear. They themselves on the other hand, developed them, or as Darmesteter says, "pushed them to an extreme."

Herein were laid the first germs of the schism between the two sections of the Indo-Irânians, the one known as the Indian section or the Indian branch, because it migrated later on to India, and the other known as the Irânian section or the Irânian branch, because it migrated to Iran or ancient Persia.

•
Origin of the
schism,

Prof. Darmesteter thus speaks of these early germs of difference and schism :

"The God that has established the laws in nature is the Heaven God. He is the greatest of gods, since there is nothing above him nor outside of him; he has made everything, since everything is produced or takes place in him; he is the wisest of all gods, since with his eyes, the sun, moon, and stars, he sees everything.

"This god was named either after his bodily nature Varana, 'the all-embracing sky,' or after his spiritual attri-

bates Asura, 'the Lord,' Asura *vishvavedas*, 'the all-knowing Lord,' Asura Mazdhâ, 'the Lord of high knowledge.'

"The supreme Asura of the Indo-Irânian religion, the Heaven god, is called in the Avesta Ahura Mazda, 'the all-knowing Lord'; his concrete name Varana, which became his usual name in India (Varuna), was lost in Iran.....

"The spiritual attributes of the Heaven god were daily more and more strongly defined, and his material attributes were thrown farther into the back ground.....

"In the Indo-Irânian religion, the supreme Asura, although he was the supreme god, was not the only god. There were near him and within him many mighty beings, the sun, wind, lightning, thunder, rain, prayer, sacrifice, which as soon as they struck the eye or the fancy of man, were at once turned into gods. If the Heaven Asura, greater in time and space, eternal and universal, everlasting and ever present, was without effort raised to the supreme rank by his twofold infinitude, there were other gods, of shorter but mightier life, who maintained against him their right to independence. The progress of religious thought might as well have gone on to transfer power from him to any one of these gods, as to make his authority unrivalled. The former was the case in India: in the middle of the Vedic period, Indra, the dazzling god of storm, rose to supremacy in the Indian Pantheon, and outshines Varuna with the roar and splendour of his feats: but soon to give way to a new and mystic king, Prayer or Brahman,

"Not so did Mazdeism, which struggled on towards unity. The Lord slowly brought everything under his unquestioned supremacy, and the other gods became not only his subjects, but his creatures."¹

In the Gathas, the oldest portion of the Avesta, wherein
 The Historical tone we see traces of the hand of the Prophet
 of the Gathas. himself, we find, what is called, the

¹ S.B.E. IV (1880), Introduction, pp. LVIII-LIX.

“Historical tone” about the struggle and the schism. There, we see emphatic expressions of struggle and of efforts to part from an old state of affairs, that had, as it were, grown intolerable, both from a material point of view and from a moral and spiritual point of view.

At times, a question has been raised, whether Zoroaster was a historical personage. The internal evidence of the Gathas shows that he was a historical personage.¹ These poetical compositions clearly show, that therein, it is a living man who gives a vivid expression of the inmost feelings of his heart and who struggles for bringing about a better state of things.

Thus, we see, that, while the ancient Iranians began to develop, in their proper legitimate channels, the two principal notions of the Indo-Iranian religion, the other branch began, if not to lose sight of them, at least, to obscure them. This explains, why Zoroaster and his followers, the ancient Iranians, are spoken of as Reformers or as Puritans of the old world. For example, Dr. Mills thus speaks of the Avesta religion of reform :

“The Avesta Religion and the Vedic Religion are parts of the same original Faith which arose in immemorial ages in the common home of the related races in the North, North-West, or North-East, of India, when the ancestors of the present Hindoos and of the present Parsis were one and the same. The then future Indians were once Iranians, as they came down to India, in all human probability, from Persia, that region which was, till the Arab invasion, the domain where the common Gods of the Veda and Avesta were worshipped. The Avesta religion is the result of a pointing and reform

1 Vide my જરથેશ્ત્રી ધર્મની તવારીખ (History of the Zoroastrian Religion), pp. 43-66

of the old ideas common to the earlier hymns of the undivided people."¹

A recent writer on the subject says : that "the paramount object of Zoroaster was less change than conservation."² This statement would, at first sight, surprise one, who is told, that Zoroaster was a Reformer, and that his Iranians were Puritans. But, what is meant is this : that when the other branch of the Indo-Irânian stock permitted the principal notions of monotheism and speculative dualism to disappear gradually from their religion, Zoroaster and his followers preserved them intact—nay, developed them and purified them.

Zoroastrianism, as latterly developed, contains two sets of elements, one, that was common to the Indo-Irânian religion, and the other, that was special to itself as the Irânian religion.

The old and the new elements in Zoroastrianism.

Prof. Darmesteter thus refers to this subject:—

"The religion of the Magi is derived from the same source as that of the Indian Rishis, that is, from the religion followed by the common forefathers of the Iranians and Indians, the Indo-Iranian religion. The Mazdoan belief is, therefore, composed of two different strata ; the one comprises all the gods, myths, and ideas which were already in existence during the Indo-Irânian period, whatever changes they may have undergone during the actual Irânian period ; the other comprises the gods, myths, and ideas which were only developed after the separation of the two religions."³

1 "The Hymns of Zoroaster for familiar use" (1909) by Dr. L. H. Mills, Preface, pp. V-VI.

2 Countess Martinego Cesaresco, in the *Contemporary Review* of November, 1907, p. 495. Vide her "Place of Animals in Human Thought," p. 123.

3 S.B. E. Vol. IV (1880); Introduction, p. LVII.

The schism had begun some time before the time of Zoroaster. The Zoroastrian books speak of several personages before his time who had taken an active part in the movement.

Traces of the schism even before the time of Zoroaster.

They were the following :

Gayomard. ¹	Hoshang. ²	Tehmuras. ³
Haoma. ⁴	Jamshed. ⁵	Faridun ⁶ .
Kâus. ⁷	Kaikhosru. ⁸	

These personages had begun the work to some extent and Zoroaster actuated or actively influenced the movement. During the times of the predecessors of Zoroaster, there were occasional lapses, at times serious, and Zoroaster's great work was this, that he gave, as it were, the final blow of completion to the schism and established monotheism in Irân on a surer basis.

As the recent talented writer quoted above says: Zoroaster "saw around, a world full of idolatry, and he feared lest the purer faith of Irân should be swamped by the encroachments of polytheism and atheism.... The aim of every doctrine or practice which he introduced was to revivify, to render more comprehensible, more consistent, the old monotheistic faith."⁹

1 Yaçna XXVI, 4, 5, 10. Farvardin Yasht, 87.

2 Aban Yasht, 21-22. Gosh Yasht, 4. Farvardin Yasht, 137. Ashi Yasht, 25. Ram Yasht, 9. Jamyâd Yasht, 26. Dadistân-i-Dini, Chap. LXV, 5. Minokherad, Chap. XXVII, 19, 20.

3 Farvardin Yasht 98. Ram Yasht, 12. Jamyâd Yasht, 28, 29. Bundehesh XXXIV, 4. Minokherad XXVII, 21-22.

4 Yaçna IX, 26.

5. Aban Yasht 25-27. Vendidad, II, 12.

6 Yaçna IX, 7, 3. Abân Yasht, 33-34. Gosh Yasht, 13. Farvardin Yasht, 131. 7 Jamyâd Yasht, 71. 8 Jamyâd Yasht, 74. Bundehesh XVII, 7.

9 "The Faith of Iran" by Countess Martinengo Cesaresco in the Contemporary Review of October 1907, p. 494, vide, her "The Place of Animals in Human Thought" p. 123.

IV

THE IRANIAN RELIGION

A ZOROASTRIAN'S CREED.

Its Theology.

After having spoken of the common Indo-Îrânian religion generally, we will now speak of the Îrânian religion in particular.

A Zoroastrian's
creed.
Its Monotheism.

The twelfth chapter of the Yagna contains the Articles of Faith of an ancient Îrânian. It is, what Dr. Mills calls, "The Mazdayasnian Confession". The contents of the chapter can be conveniently divided into the following six heads :—

1. A declaration by the reciter to break the influence or the action of the Daêvas, and his firm belief in Ahura Mazda as the source of all things.
2. A declaration to stand by the side of his co-religionists and to do all that is necessary to protect them from harm and to help them.
3. A declaration, in detail, of his hatred of all that is evil and that proceeds from the Daêvas, and of his resolve to follow the teachings of Zoroaster in this matter.
4. A declaration of his line of conduct in life. He enumerates some of the best objects of the creation of God, and announces his resolve to be as useful to others as these objects are. He declares his willingness to act as Zoroaster and his first disciples acted, and to hold God Himself as his *ideal* before him.

5. A declaration in favour of the moral triad of good thoughts, good words and good actions.
6. The final declaration, announcing himself to be a true Mazdayaṇian Zoroastrian.

Substance of these
declarations.

The substance of this chapter containing the different kinds of declaration can be summarised thus:—

“I am opposed to the path of the Daêvas and am a follower of the path of Ahura Mazda. I praise the Amesha Spentas. I believe Ahura Mazda to be the creator of all good things. I praise wisdom. May it come to me. I will protect the cattle from rapine proceeding from thieves and robbers. I will protect the quarters of the Mazdayaṇîns from all sorts of harm. I will see that all Mazdayaṇîns live in peace and security as they like. I will do no harm to the Mazdayaṇîns, even if my life is in risk. I hate the wicked Daêvas and I will never be in their company. Water, vegetation and cattle are useful to all around us. I will have them as my models, and try to be useful like them to all around me. I will have Ahura Mazda himself, and then Zoroaster, Frashaostar and Jâmâsp as my *ideals* before me. I will always practise good thoughts, good words and good deeds. I will praise the Mazdayaṇian Zoroastrian religion which grants peace and devotion.”

The last part
announcing the
Mazdayaṇian zoro-
astrian religion

The first and the last parts of this chapter are very important. In the last part, the reciter declares his adherence to the faith. It is the portion, which a modern Zoroastrian recites several times during the day when he unties and puts on again his *kusti* or sacred thread. It runs thus:

“I am a worshipper of God (Mazda). I am a Zoroastrian worshipper of God. I agree to praise the Zoroastrian

religion and to believe in that religion. I praise good thoughts. I praise good words. I praise good deeds. I praise the good Mazdayaṇian religion, which allays dissensions and quarrels, which brings about kinship or brotherhood, which is holy, which is the greatest, the best and the most excellent of all (the religions) that exist and that shall in future exist, and which is the religion revealed by Ahura (Mazda) to Zoroaster. I ascribe all good to Ahura Mazda. This is the praise of the Mazdayaṇian religion."

The first part, renouncing the Daēva-yaṇian religion.

The chapter of creed begins with a statement renouncing Daēva worship. It runs thus :

"I drive the Daēvas hence ; I confess as a Mazda-worshipper of the order of Zarathushtra, estranged from the Daēvas, devoted to the lore of the Lord, a praiser of the Bountiful Immortals ; and to Ahura Mazda, the good and endowed with good possessions, I attribute all things good, to the holy One, the resplendent, to the glorious, whose are all things whatsoever which are good ; whose is the Kine, whose is Asha (the righteous order pervading all things pure), whose are the stars, in whose lights the glorious beings and objects are clothed." ¹

This emphatic declaration due to ancient Sehiism.

We see here, that the ancient creed began with words which dissociated an ancient Iranian from the Daeva-worship prevalent round about him, and associated him with the pure Mazda-worship then beginning to take a deeper root. Even a modern Parsee emphatically calls himself a Mazdayaṇân, a Zoroastrian Mazdayaṇân i.e. a person who worships Mazda, the all-knowing God, according to the way taught by Zoroaster. He expresses himself as opposed to Daeva-yaṇa i.e. the

(1) Dr. Mills. S.B. E. XXXI pp. 247-48.

worship of the Daêvas. This emphatic declaration is due to the schism above referred to, whereby the ancient Irânians parted from the people of the sister branch or branches of the Indo-Iranian stock—the schism due to the fact, that the other branch or branches began to lose sight of the original two notions of the common Indo-Iranian religion *viz.* the latent monotheism and the unconscious dualism.

Who were the Daêvas? The question is: Who were the

Daêvas to whom the ancient Iranians expressed themselves as opposed? The word Daêva latterly had a very large signification.

Dæva is a very ancient Âryan word for God, being derived from an ancient Âryan root *div* to shine. Not only the Eastern Âryans, the Hindus, but the Western Âryans also have the word in one form or another for their God. For example, the Greeks had Deos or Zeus; the Romans Deus; the Germans Teus; the Lithunians Dievas. But it appears that among others, the word degenerated from its primitive purity. When, instead of believing, that there was only one Daêva or one God who was always good and was the causer of all causes, they began to entertain a degrading polytheistic belief, the word lost its primitive good meaning. The word, instead of being restricted and used for God alone, began to be used for more gods than one. When the early Irânians saw the spread of this belief they stamped the word as unfit for the name of God. Among them, the word came to designate the many false gods of their other brethren. So, the ancient Iranians understood by the word Daêva, the numerous false gods of some other sections of the older stock.

Later development
and signification of
the word Daêva.

Then, the word Daêva, once dethroned from its high pedestal, began to have, later on, a more degenerate signification. It enclosed in its signification, all persons, powers, causes or forces that

had an evil tendency, that led to do harm to creation. Thus, there were the Daêvas of the following several classes :—

1. The gods—other than the One Omniscient Lord, Ahura Mazda—who usurped the place and dignity of Ahura Mazda.

2. Tyrants or evil-disposed persons of the worst type. For example, the tyrant Azi-dahâka or Zohâk, who usurped the throne of Persia, is spoken of in the Avesta as Daêva.¹

3. The causes or things that brought about sickness and spread diseases. In the Ardibehesht Yasht and the Vendidad, different kinds of sickness and disease are known as Daêvas.

4. Moral vices.

A Mazdayaṇian Zoroastrian prayed to oppose the work and influence of all these Daêvas. Dr. Haug thus speaks of the general subject of Ahura and these Daêvas :

“In the Vedas, as in the older portions of the Zend Avesta (see the Gâthas), there are sufficient traces to be discovered that the Zoroastrian religion arose out of a vital struggle against the form which the Brahmanical religion had assumed at a certain early period. Both creeds are known as diametrically opposed to one another in both their scriptures. One is called the belief of the Asuras (*Ahura* in the Avesta), the other that of the Devas. This circumstance cannot be merely accidental, the less so, as we find the word *Asura* used in the older Vedic hymns in a perfectly good sense, and as a name of several Devas themselves, which fact clearly shows that there must have been once a vital struggle between the professors of the Deva and those of the Ahura religion, in consequence of which the

(1) Yaçna IX 8.

originally¹ good meaning of Asura was changed to a bad

The Zoroastrian conception of God. We have so far seen, how the ancient Iranians, who, at one time, believed in the common God, the Daêva of the Indo-Iranian brethren, separated from their other brethren, and how they enthroned Ahura Mazda in the place of Indo-Iranian Daêva, when the latent monotheism and the unconscious dualism connected with Daêva began gradually to disappear. We will see here, what the Irânian conception of Ahura Mazda was, and is even now, as preserved in the Avesta.

God is spoken of as Ahura, Mazda, or Ahura Mazda. He is known as Ahura, *i. e.* the Lord of Existence, because He is eternal. He has existed from times eternal and will exist for times eternal. He is, not only self-existent, but is the bestower of existence upon all things seen in the world. Though unseen, He is recognized in His created world. The sun, the moon, the stars, manifest His existence. The regular way in which these heavenly bodies move and work testifies a master-mind. The air we breathe, the phenomena of the movements of water, the growth of vegetation, the constitution of animals and men, and the regularity, system and order seen in the growth of all these, demonstrate His Master-mind and His power. From Nature our thoughts go to Nature's God. His grand Nature proves His existence. The other name of God is Mazda *i. e.* the great Knower, the Omniscient Lord. He is so called, because He rules the world by His infinite knowledge. It is by His infinite knowledge that He has created the Universe and has set it a-going.

(1) Haug's *Essays on the Parsis* (2nd. Edition), p. 287

V

THE PURITANIC INFLUENCE OF ZOROASTRIAN MONOTHEISM IN THE WEST. ON GREECE.

We will now speak of the Puritanic influence of Zoroastrianism in the West.

The view of Herodotus, as to the Irânian conception of God being purer than the Greek.

We have the authority of Herodotus¹, to say that the ancient Irânians' conception of God was higher than that of the ancient Greeks. He says: "They have

no images of the gods, no temples nor altars, and consider the use of them a sign of folly. This comes, I think, from their not believing the gods to have the same nature with men, as the Greeks imagine. Their wont, however, is to ascend the summits of the loftiest mountains, and there to offer sacrifice to Jupiter, which is the name they give to the whole circuit of the firmament. They likewise offer to the sun and moon, to the earth, to fire, to water, and to the winds. These are the only gods whose worship has come down to them from ancient times."

From Nature to Nature's God.

This statement of Herodotus about the Irânian form of worship points to the Zoroastrian principle of worship, which leads one from Nature to Nature's God.

"The first and the greatest truth that dawns upon the mind of a Zoroastrian is that the great and the infinite universe, of which he is an infinitesimally small part, is the work of a powerful hand—the result of a master-mind. The first and the greatest conception of that master-mind,

1. *Ek.* I, 131. Rawlinson's Herodotus Vol. I, p. 269-70.

Ahura-Mazda, is that, as the name implies, He is the Omniscient Lord, and, as such, He is the ruler of both the material and the immaterial world, the corporeal and the incorporeal world, the visible and the invisible world.

“As to the material, corporeal, or visible world, the sublime objects and the grand phenomena of Nature which present themselves to the sight of all men, from intelligent and keen observers to ordinary simple men whose powers of observation are in their crude infancy, bear evidence to His Omnipotence, to His all-working and ever-working power. If one were to ask, which is the best and the surest evidence that Zoroastrianism rests upon, for its belief in the existence of God, the reply is, that it is the “Evidence from Nature.” The harmony, the order, the law, and the system observed in Nature, leads the mind of a Zoroastrian from Nature to Nature’s God. One of the best hymns of the Gathas (Ch. 44) is written under that train of reasoning. It says, that the harmony and order, observed in the grand phenomena of Nature, bear ample evidence to the existence of One as the Architect of the whole Universe. The regular movements of the sun and the stars, the periodical waxing and the waning of the moon, the regular way in which the earth and the clouds are sustained, the regular flow of water and the gradual growth of vegetation, the regular movements of the winds, and the regular succession of light and darkness of day and night with their accompaniments of wakefulness and sleep,—all these grand and striking phenomena of Nature point to, and bear ample evidence of, the existence of an Almighty Power who is not only the Creator but the Preserver of this great Universe, who has not only launched that Universe into existence with a premeditated plan of completeness, but who, with the controlling hand of a father, preserves, by certain fixed laws, harmony and order, here, there, and anywhere.

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"As in the Physical World, so in the Moral World. As Ahura-Mazda is the ruler of the Physical World, so He is the ruler of the Spiritual World. He is the most spiritual among the spiritual ones. His distinguished attributes are good mind, righteousness, desirable control, piety, perfection, and immortality. As He is the source of all physical light, so He is the source of all spiritual light, all moral light. He is the Beneficent Spirit from whom emanate all good and all piety. He looks into the hearts of men, and sees, how much of the good and of the piety emanated from Him has made its home there, and thus rewards the virtuous and punishes the vicious.

"As He has arranged all order and harmony in the Physical World, so he has done in the Moral World. Of course, one sees, at times, on the plane of this world, moral disorders and want of harmony ; but then, the present state is only a part, and that a very small part, of His scheme of moral government. As petty disorders here and there in the grand system of Nature do not disclose any want of system or harmony in the grand scheme of the Universe, so petty disorders on the moral plane in the present state of life do not disclose any want of method in His moral government. In the Moral World, virtue has its own reward, and vice its own punishment. Virtue has all happiness and pleasure in the long run, and vice all misery and grief. From a Zoroastrian point of view the consideration of these facts presents a strong evidence for the existence of a future state of life, for the immortality of the soul. As the Ruler of the world, Ahura-Mazda hears the prayers of the ruled. He grants the prayers of those who are pious in thoughts, pious in words, and pious in deeds. 'He not only rewards the good, but punishes the wicked. All that is created, good or evil, fortune or misfortune, is His work.'"¹

(1) Vide my "Religious System of the Parsees." pp. 5-7.

Thus, we see, that the harmony, order and system, observed in Nature, teach a Zoroastrian good discipline to secure purity of life, by preserving order and harmony, both on physical and moral planes.

How Greece and Europe missed the Puritanic influence of Zoroastrianism.

The late Prof. Max Muller said : "There were periods in the history of the world when the worship of Ormuzd threatened to rise triumphant on the ruins of the temples of all other gods. If the battles of Marathon and Salamis had been lost, and Greece had succumbed to Persia, the state religion of the empire of Cyrus, which was the worship of Ormuzd, might have become the religion of the whole civilized world. Persia had absorbed the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires; the Jews were either in Persian captivity or under Persian sway at home; the sacred monuments of Egypt had been mutilated by the hands of Persian soldiers. The edicts of the king—the king of the kings—were sent to India, to Greece, to Scythia, and to Egypt, and, if 'by the grace of Ahura Mazda,' Darius had crushed the liberty of Greece, the purer faith of Zoroaster might easily have superseded the Olympian fables."¹

Indirect influence through Mithraism.

Though, as pointed out by Prof. Max Muller, Greece and all Europe escaped from the direct influence of "the purer faith of Zoroaster," they had their share of indirect influence, which was exerted through the Greek and Roman colonies in the East, with which the Irânians came into more frequent contact—contact, by means of frequent conquests and by means of commerce. In fact, the influence of the Irânian religion in earlier times on the West, on Greece and Rome, paved the way for the spread of Christianity later on. That influence was exerted through Mithraism. Mithra was the Yazata or angel of Light among the Irânians. He represented one of

1 "Chips from a German Workshop."

the grandest objects of Nature whose praises the¹ Iranians sang on "the summits of loftest mountains", referred to by Herodotus. His praises were extolled into worship, and, as such, spread into Western Asia and, from there, into Europe. Of this influence of Mithraism, the late M. Renan said : "If the world had not become Christian it would have become Mithraistic." As said by Dr. Adeney, this Mithraism was the principal source that brought about "the awakening" and "religious revival" which made the way of Christianity a little easier.²

That being the case, if Christianity was a puritanic improvement on the religion of the Greeks and Romans, the early Zoroastrianism of the Irânians had a hand in that puritanic improvement in as much as it prepared the ground for Christianity.

Persia persianized
Greece.

In the long line of years during which Irân came into contact with Greece, it was more Irân that had influenced Greece than *vice versa*. That was the case, even when Alexander the great conquered and subdued Persia. Count Gobineau, in his History of Persia³, seems to express his regret that Greece triumphed over Persia at the battle of Marathon, and says, that Persia under Darius gave much that was good to Greece and to the ancients. He says : "Darius fit de grandes choses. Il institua une organisation puissante ; l'Occident n'avait jamais rien vu de semblable.....Ce qu'il n'eut qu'au siècle d'Auguste, c'est un développement intellectuel d'une valeur analogue à celle qui déterminait la formation du mazdéisme et anima la philosophie et les arts de l'antiquité ; tout ce qu'apprirent les Grecs, tout ce que Platon enseigna de sérieux tout ce que les écoles archaïques produisirent de chefs-d'

1 Quoted by Dr. Adeney, in his "Greek and Eastern Churches," p 10.

2 Ibid, pp 10-11

3 Histoire des Perses. Vol. II, p. 143.

œuvre eut, à l'époque de Darius, son foyer et son prototype dans l'Asie occidentale. Mais ce que les Romains ne connurent et ne pratiquèrent jamais, pas même sous le règne tant célébré des Antonins, ce fut cette douceur systématique appliquée à l'administration des peuples, devenue de règle depuis Cyrus, et à laquelle Darius se montra si régulièrement fidèle. Non-seulement les sujets furent traités avec des soins particuliers, mais les rebelles trouvèrent une indulgence aussi étendue que les circonstances le permirent."

Prof. Darmesteter, though he does not share the regret of his compatriot, says, that, though Greece was victorious, it was influenced by Persia. Instead of hellenising Persia, it itself was persianized. He says: "Dans sa guerre de revanche la Grèce n'ait pas assez vaincu; c'est que sa victoire sur la Perse n'ait été qu'une victoire matérielle et dont elle a souffert elle-même plus que la victime. Alexandre rêvait de fondre l'Occident et l'Orient: il n'a réussi qu'à moitié; il a persianisé la Grèce, il n'a pas hellénisé la Perse,"¹

In this *persianising* influence, was included the influence of Persian religion and philosophy. The Parsee books say, that out of the two great royal libraries of ancient Persia, Alexander the Great destroyed one, the one at Persepolis known as the Daz-i-Napesht. His Greeks carried away the books of the other, the one known as the Ganji-Shapigân (or Shaspigân). They got these translated into their Greek. It is these translations that may have exerted some influence on them. What MaxMuller calls "the purer faith of Zoroaster," to which even Herodotus seems to show some liking, had its influence upon the religion of Greece. Though it did not displace it, it shook it to, some extent, and made the advent of Christianity, later on, somewhat easy.

1 Coup d'œil sur L'Histoire de la Perse, par Darmesteter. p 21.

VI

THE PURITANIC INFLUENCE ON EGYPT.

Puritanic influence on Egypt, Looking to Egypt, we find, that there also, the Puritanic influence of Persia was great. Just as in Greece and Rome and in the territories subject to them, it prepared the soil for the coming Christianity, a long time before it came, in Egypt, it prepared the way for the "new deity" of Ptolemy I. It was this Puritanic influence of the ancient Persians that made the work of this Ptolemy, known as Ptolemy Soter or Ptolemy the Saviour, easier. His main object in Egypt, on the throne of which he ascended after the death of his royal master Alexander the Great, was to create "a new deity", by means of which he could consolidate his rule and power. As said in the beginning, he tried to do in Egypt, what Akbar the Great tried to do in India, centuries after him. He succeeded, while Akbar failed. In his attempt, Akbar had tried to make a direct use of some Mazdayaçnian Zoroastrian elements.¹ Ptolemy did not try to make any direct use of that kind, but rested on the silent work of the Iranian Mazdayaçnism.

Rev. C. Kingsley thus refers to this work: "He (Ptolemy Soter) effected with complete success a feat which has been attempted, before and since, by very many princes and potentates, but has always, except in Ptolemy's case, proved somewhat of a failure, namely, the making a new deity. Mythology in general was in a rusty state. The old Egyptian gods had grown in his dominions very unfashionable, under the summary iconoclasm to which they had been subjected by the Monotheist Persians,—the Puritans of the old world, as they have been well called. Indeed all the dolls—and the treasures of the doll's temples too, had been carried off by Cambyses to Babylon."²

¹ *Vide* my paper on "The Parsees at the Court of Akbar and Dastur Mehrjee Rana." *Vide* Journal of the B. B. R. A. Society, Vol XXI, Nos. LVIII, and LIX.

² "Alexandria and her Schools," by Rev. Charles Kingsley p 10-11.

VII

INFLUENCE OF IRAN ON THE WEST THROUGH MAHOMEDANISM.

Coming to the later times—times of the conquest of Persia by the Arabs,—we find that Persia continued to exert some influence. Mahomedanism is a pure monotheistic religion, free from any idol-worship. With the occupation of a large part of Europe by its votaries, the Arabs or Moors, it has influenced, to a great extent, the history and the civilization of Europe. It has given a good deal to Europe. Had not Charles Martel defeated the Saracens in the battle of Tours, the whole of Europe would have perhaps become Mahomedan.¹ But, even during its occupation of a part of Western Europe for several years, Mahomedanism had some influence on Europe. It had some hand in the removal of the effect of the Dark Ages of Europe.

For an instance of the darkness of these Dark Ages, take the instance of this very Charles Martel, the saviour of Christianity in Europe at this time. Gibbon says: "It might have been expected that the saviour of Christendom would have been canonized, or at least applauded, by the gratitude of the clergy, who are indebted to his sword for their present existence. But in the public distress the mayor² of the palace had been compelled to apply the riches, or at least the revenues, of the bishops and abbots, to the relief of the state and the reward of the soldiers. His merits were forgotten, his sacrilege alone was remembered, and, in an epistle to a Carlovingian prince, a Gallic synod pre-

1 Vide for this battle "The Decline and fall of the Roman Empire," by Gibbon, (in 4 volumes), Vol. III, pp. 511-12.

2 Charles Martel was the Mayor or Duke of the Franks. For some further particulars about Charles Martel, vide my "Masonic Papers," pp. 100—108.

sumes to declare that his ancestor was damned, that on the opening of his tomb, the spectators were affrighted by a smell of fire and the aspect of a horrid dragon; and that a saint of the times was indulged with a pleasant vision of the soul and body of Charles Martel, burning, to all eternity, in the abyss of hell.”¹ In the removal of such a darkness, the then prevalent culture of Mahomedanism had a powerful hand. It helped the European Renaissance after the Dark ages. If Protestant Christians take the Reformation of Luther as a turning point in the history of Christianity and as a landmark exerting some puritanic influence on it, some credit for that may be given to Mahomedanism, because its votaries’ stay in Europe for a long time had prepared the way for the Reformation by the spread of knowledge. Mahomedan Universities in Spain were the seats of learning in those times, and they helped the spread of knowledge which prepared the way for the Reformation.

Now ancient Zoroastrianism was not without its influence on Mahomedanism. Mahomedanism, though a rival religion which displaced Zoroastrianism in Persia, had the origin of some of its elements in Zoroastrianism. The Arabs, who gave birth to it, were long under the sway of the Sassanian Zoroastrians by whom they were much influenced. Prof. Darmesteter thus speaks of the combined influence of the ancient Iranians on the Persia of the Mahomedans: “Si l’invasion de l’Islam a profondément modifié les formes extérieures de la pensée iranienne, elle n’a pourtant ni transformé l’intérieur, ni rompu le lien de continuité entre son passé et son présent, qui sortent l’un de l’autre, s’expliquent et s’éclairent l’un par l’autre. Qu’il s’agisse de la langue, de la religion, de la littérature, de l’histoire même, vous rencontrez à chaque pas dans la période moderne des faits dont l’origine remonte aux premiers temps de la Perse et qui, par suite, ne prennent leur sens réel

1 Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. II, p. 512.

qu' à la lumière des documents antiques."¹ Even in the new beliefs of the Arabs, there were old Zoroastrian influences. As Darmesteter elsewhere says, "the new beliefs which the Arabs brought to the Persians were old acquaintances with the latter."² In new Mahomedanism, there was still a good deal of "the persistence of religious beliefs and practices"³ of the ancient Zoroastrians.

VIII

A ZOROASTRIAN SCREED.

Its Speculative Philosophy.

Speculative Dualism

We have, so far, spoken of the Zoroastrian theology,—of its Monotheism, which was the first of the two notions that were common to the old Indo-Iranian people and which the ancient Iranians developed. We saw, how the theology, distinguishing its Ahura Mazda from the Daêva, the old Indo-Aryan God, exerted its puritanic influence. We will now speak of its philosophy, its unconscious monotheistic dualism—a dualism to which even modern thought is partially turning. We will see, how the ancient Irânians developed that notion—the unconscious dualism—when their brethren, the other section of the ancient Indians, allowed it to gradually disappear. While the consideration of the first notion appertains to the domain of theology, strictly so called, the consideration of this notion belongs to the domain of the philosophy of the Zoroastrian religion.

1 "Coup D' Œil sur l' Histoire de la Perse," p. 11.

2 "Haurvatât et Ameretât" translated by Mr. Hirji P. Wadia (1888), p. 11; n.

3 Ibid p. 73.

The philosophy about Creation Ahura Mazda or God is, according to the Parsee scriptures, the Causer of all causes. He is the Creator, as well as the Destroyer, the Increaser as well as the Decreaser. He gives birth to different creations, and it is He who brings about their end. How is it then, that He brings about these two contrary results? In the words of Dr. Haug, "Having arrived at the grand idea of the unity and indivisibility of the Supreme Being, he (Zoroaster) undertook to solve the great problem which has engaged the attention of so many wise men of antiquity, and even of modern times, *viz.*, how are the imperfections discoverable in the world, the various kinds of evils, wickedness, and baseness, compatible with the goodness, holiness, and justice of God? This great thinker of remote antiquity solved this difficult question *philosophically* by the supposition of two primeval causes, which, though different, were united, and produced the world of material things, as well as that of the spirit."¹

"These two primeval causes or principles are called in the Avesta, the two Mainyus. This word comes from the ancient Âryan root "*man*" "to think." It may be properly rendered into English by the word "spirit," meaning "that which can only be conceived by the mind but not felt by the senses." Of these two spirits or primeval causes or principles, one is Creative and the other Destructive. The former is known in the Avesta as Spenta-mainyush or the Increasing Spirit and the latter as Angra-mainyush or the Decreasing Spirit. These two spirits work under God, Mazda, who, through the agency, as it were, of the two spirits, is the causer of all causes in the universe, the Creator as well as the Destroyer. These two spirits work under the Almighty day and night. They create and destroy, and thus they have done ever since the world was created."²

1 Haug's Essays on the Parsis (2nd edition), p. 303.

2 Vide my "Religious system of the Parsees", 2nd Ed. (1903) pp, 7-9.

It is in this "dualistic conception of creation" that, as Countess E.M. Cesaresco says, "the true originality of Zoroastrianism as a religious system lies." It is "the nexus that connects all its parts."¹ We will not enter here into the details, as to how it connects all its parts. ² As Sir Henry Rawlinson says: "It was in fact the Dualistic heresy which separated the Zend, or Persian branch of the Arians, from their Vedic brethren, and compelled them to migrate to the westward."³

The above philosophical notions, which distinguish Zoroastrianism from other religions then extant, have led some to misunderstand Zoroastrian theology. But scholars like Haug, West, Mills and others have ably spoken against the faulty view that Zoroaster preached dualism. As Mr. Samuel Laing has said, to "this simple and sublime" view of religion "the best modern thought is fast approximating. Men of Science like Huxley, philosophers like Herbert Spencer, poets like Tennyson, might all subscribe to it; and even enlightened Christian divines, like Dr. Temple, are not very far from it when they admit the idea of a Creator behind the atoms and energies, whose original impress, given in the form of laws of nature, was so perfect as to require no secondary interference."⁴

1 The Contemporary Review of October 1907, p. 195. "The Place of Animals in Human Thought," p. 125

2 *Vide* my "Religious System of the Parsees" for some of the details.

3 Col. Rawlinson's Notes on the Early History of Babylonia, p. 37. Quoted by George Rawlinson, in his Herodotus, Vol I, p. 427.

4 A Modern Zoroastrian, by Samuel Laing (1837), pp. 203-4.

IX

A ZOROASTRIAN'S CREED.

Its Moral System.

Zoroastrian Moral system based on philosophic principles. The consideration of the question of the Speculative Philosophy of Zoroastrianism brings us to the question of its moral philosophy. In the 12th Chapter of the Yaçna, Zoroaster thus pithily announces his views about morality. "I praise good thoughts. I praise good words. I praise good actions".

Prof. Harlez¹ says: "La religion mazdéenne se distingue de toutes les autres religions antiques en ce qu'elle a une morale systématisée et fondée sur des principes philosophiques". Let us see, how the moral system of Zoroastrianism has been founded on philosophic principles.

As there are two primeval principles that produce our natural world, as said above, so, there are two principles inherent in the nature of man which encourage him to do good or tempt him to do evil. One asks him to support the cause of the Good Principle, the other to follow that of the Evil Principle. The first is known by the name of Vohumana or Bahman *i.e.* good mind. The second is known by the name of Akamana *i.e.* bad mind.

These two principles exert their influence upon a man's *manashni*, *garashni* and *kunashni* *i.e.* upon a man's thoughts, words and deeds. When the influence of Vohumana predominates, the man's thoughts, words and deeds result in *humata* (good thoughts), *hukhta* (good words) and *hvarshsta* (good actions). But when the influence of Akamana predomi-

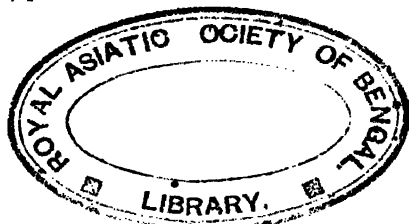
nates, his thoughts, words and deeds result in *dushmata* (evil thoughts), *dusukhta* (evil words) and *dusvarshla* (evil actions.)

The fifth chapter of the Vendidad gives, as it were, a short definition of what is morality or piety. "*Yazdô mashyâi aipi zânthem valishtâ*" i.e. "Purity is the best thing for men after birth." This, you may say, is the motto of the Zoroastrian religion. The writer then further says, that "the preservation of good thoughts, good words and good deeds is purity". In these three pithy words, *humata, hukhta hearshla* (good thoughts, good words and good deeds) is summed up, so to say, the whole of the moral philosophy of the Zoroastrian scriptures. Your good thoughts, your good words and your good deeds will be your intercessors. They are your saviours. Nothing more is wanted. Thus, the late Dr. Haug has rightly observed that "the moral philosophy of Zoroaster was moving in the triad of thought, word and deed". These three words form, as it were, the pivot, upon which the moral structure of Zoroastrianism turns. It is the ground work upon which the whole edifice of Zoroastrian morality rests.¹

This moral system based on the philosophic principle of dualistic conception, does not, as Countess M. Cesaresco says, "make a single demand on human nature except to be good, even as its Creator was good."

1 Vide my "Religious System of the Parsees, pp. 15-18."

2 Contemporary Review of November 1907, p. 496. "The place of Animals in Human Thought", p. 127



X

GENERAL CONCLUSION.

Thus, we see, that Zoroastrianism, whose founder, Zoroaster, has been often spoken of as a reformer, had the tendency of exerting puritanic influence in theological beliefs, philosophical speculations, and moral practices. It is this puritanic tendency that Dr. Rudolf Eucken refers to, when he speaks of the struggle for purity in Parsiism. Speaking of "the characteristic nature" of the different religions, which are decided by the "precise contents of the message and the mode of communion" of "the great personalities" or prophets, who act "as mediators between the Godhead and the world," he says: "Religion may be understood as a conjoint struggle for goodness, light and purity as means of protection from evil spirits as in Parsecism."¹

If we take the words 'purity' and 'puritanism' in a wider sense, in the sense in which it is taken in the above-quoted maxim of the Avesta, that "Purity is the best thing for man after birth," it is this puritanic tendency in all directions that Dr. Rapp refers to, when he speaks of the Iranians having, as it were, "a distinct sixth sense for the pure". He says: "The second expedient to expand out and to strengthen the empire of Ormuzd, and to weaken the influence of Ahriman, is the holding pure of one's own-self and of the sacred creation of Ormuzd. The Iranians had a cultivated sense for purity and decency; whatever has in the slightest degree anything impure, nauseous in itself, instils into them an unconquerable horror. This has a connection in part with the fact, that the impure is mostly even unhealthy

1 "The Truth of Religion," by Prof. Rudolf Eucken, translated by Dr. W. T. Jones, p. 366.

and harmful, but in several cases the cause of the impurity does not allow of being traced back to that fact. The Iranians had in a certain measure a distinct sixth sense for the pure. All of that sort has, according to their view, their origin in darkness, in obscurity."¹ Their lofty ideal of purity and decency, led them to a lofty ideal of mental and moral purity.

Herodotus, Xenophon, Strabo and other classical authors refer to the different ways in which the Iranians cultivated their sense of purity and decency. For example, Herodotus refers to their sense of sanitary purity when he says: "They never defile a river with the secretions of their bodies, nor even wash their hands in one; nor will they allow others to do so."² Strabo refers to the same sense of purity when he says: "The Persians never pollute a river with urine, nor wash nor bathe in it; they never throw a dead body, nor anything unclean, into it."³ Herodotus refers to their sense of decency when he says as follows: "To vomit or obey natural calls in the presence of another is forbidden among them."⁴

Xenophon also says that the Iranians considered it to be indecorous to spit or blow the nose in the presence of others. He says:⁵ "There remain to the present day proofs of the

1 "The Religion and Customs of the Persians and other Iranians, according to the Greek and Roman Authors" (*Die Religion und Sitte der Perser und übrigen Iranier nach den griechischen und römischen Quellen*). German Oriental Society's Journal. Vol. XVII, Leipzig, (1863) pp. 52-56. Translated from the German of Dr. Rapp by Mr. K. R. Cama. "The Zoroastrian mode of Disposing of the Dead" p. 19.

2 Bk. I, 139, Rawlinson's Herodotus, Vol. I, p. 278.

3 Bk. XV, chap. III, 16. Hamilton and Falconer's Translation, Vol. III, p. 137.

4 Bk. I, 133, Rawlinson's Herodotus Vol. I, pp. 273-4.

5 *Cyropædia* Bk. I, chap. II. 16 Revd. Watson and Revd. Dale's Translation (1882. Bohn's Series), pp. 8-9. This subject is again referred to in Bk. VIII, Chap. VIII, 8. *Ibid* pp. 282-83.

spare it used among them, and of their carrying it off by exercise ; for it is yet unbecoming among them to spit or to blow the nose, or to appear troubled with flatulency ; it is unbecoming for any one to be seen going aside to make water, or for any similar cause ; and to these habits they could not possibly adhere, unless they used a very temperate diet, and exhausted their moisture by exercise, so that it may pass off some other way."

Ammianus Marcellinus¹ also thus says a similar thing : Vous ne verrez jamais un Perse lacher de l'eau de bout, ou s'écarter pour satisfaire à d'autres fonctions ; tant ils cachent avec pudeur, jusqu' à l'apparence de ces besoins... Toutes les bouches sont closes dès qu'ils prennent leur repas."

All these statements of the Classical authors about the physical purity and decency among the Iranians are significant, because, taking physical purity to be emblematic of mental purity, they are led to a higher level in morals. The following statement of Herodotus points to the efforts of the ancient Irânians to preserve a purer and a higher level in words. "They hold it unlawful to talk of anything which it is unlawful to do. The most disgraceful thing in the world, they think, is to tell a lie ; the next worst, to owe a debt : because, among other reasons, the debtor is obliged to tell lies."² Again, according to Herodotus, they had an aversion to swearing. The Iranian moralist Âdarbâd Mârespend advised the Iranians never to take an oath. This aversion to oaths led them to an aversion against market-places, because there, the vendors, to sell off their goods at as high a rate as possible, had generally recourse to "forswear themselves."³

1 Bk. XXIII, chap. VI, Ammien Marcellin, traduit en François. Tome II (Berlin 1775) p. 318.

2 Herodotus Bk. I, 139. Rawlinson's Herodotus, Vol. I, p. 278.

3 Ibid Bk. I, 153. Ibid Vol. I, p. 291.

The Avesta is replete with these ideas, prevalent of purity and decency, and so Countess M. Cazaresco very properly says that "the essential teaching of the Avesta is summed up in the text: "Adore God with a pure mind and a pure body, and honour him in His work." ¹

Goethe, in his "Last Will of the old Persian Faith" (*Vermächtniss altpersischen Glaubens*) sums up, as it were, the above-mentioned teachings of avoiding impurity and seeking purity, when he says: "As far as you can, cover up what appears to you to be impure."²

Goethe speaks on further on the characteristic Iranian taste for purity: "Let your field be laid out on a neatly purified ground. . . . Also the water must never lack in its channels a free course and cleanness. As Senderud (*Zendrud*) comes to you quite pure, from the mountain regions so let him depart again quite pure. . . . When you have thus purified earth and water, the Sun will like to shine through airs when he is worthily received and where he produces life and salvation and welfare of life."³

1 "The Faith of Iran" in her "Place of Animals in Human Thought" p. 136.

2 *Parsi Nameh* (Buck des Parsen), *West-östlicher Divan*, *Goethes Werke*. Stuttgart (1867) *Vierzehnter Band*, p. 111.

3 *Ibid.* Revd. Father Noti's Manuscript Translation.

THE PRINCIPLES OF REFORM, AS TAUGHT BY ZOROASTER.

၁၀ - နေပြည်တော် မြို့နယ်၊ ရွှေနားကျေးရွာ
၁၁ - နေပြည်တော် မြို့နယ်၊ ရွှေနားကျေးရွာ

(Visparad·XX, 1)

We invoke Advancement.

We invoke Progress.

The Zoroastrian idea of Progress.

The Zoroastrian idea of Progress. The idea of Progress is expressed in the Avesta in various ways. But the best words, that give us an idea of Progress, are *fradatha* (𐬔𐬀𐬭𐬀𐬚𐬀) and *varédatha* (𐬔𐬀𐬩𐬀𐬭𐬀𐬚𐬀). These words are often met together in the sense of 'Progress' ¹

The word *fradatha* is *frâdehashnih* (𐬥𐬀𐬭𐬀𐬔𐬀𐬨𐬀 in) Pahlavi, and may be derived from *fra-dâ* to spread. The word *varêdatha* may be derived from *varêd* (𐬕𐬀𐬭𐬀 Sanskrit वर्य Gujarati વરિ, वरि) to promote. These two words *fradatha* and *varêdatha*, generally go together and give the idea of progress. Of these two, the second *varêdatha*, better gives the idea of progress. Again, these words are, at times, associated in the Avesta with plentifulness, prosperity, strength, health, increase, fertility of corn and pasture.²

It is possible for all, whether rich or poor, to seek progress—progress for themselves in special, and progress for the community in general. What is essential for this purpose, is, that one must know his work well and do it well, in whatever sphere of life he is placed. A man who does his work

1 Yagna, IX, 17; Visparad XX, 1; Vendidad IX 57; XIII 52, 53.

2 Vendidat IX 57 ; XIII, 52, 53, 54, 56.

badly,—for example, an *Yaozdâthragar* i. e. a purifier, one whose business is to spread physical purity like a Health-officer, or mental purity like a priest—mars the cause of progress.¹ One, who knows his work well and proceeds in the path of progress thereby, gains a kind of independance for his own good, and gains the power of smiting evil generally for the good of all around him.² So, Progress is specially invoked in the Avesta with some other abstract ideas.³ The sacred writings of the Gathas are spoken of as writings suggesting the ways of acquiring progress.⁴ The search after progress is one of the objects of prayers and supplications, offerings and sacrifices.⁵

The object of the
Paper.

I propose considering the subject of Progress, not from an individual point of view but from a general point of view, from the point of view of the progress of our community as a whole.

We live in an age, when every body, now and then, speaks of Progress and of Reform—progress and reform, not only in the fields of politics, society, religion, and such other matters, but also in the matter of food, dress, habits of dwelling and such other subjects. To a certain extent, the words Progress and Reform go together. There can be no progress without reforming what is deformed. The Parsee community, is spoken of as a Progressive community, and its great prophet, Zoroaster, has been spoken of as a Reformer. So, let us see, on what principle or principles, taught by Zoroaster, true Reform and Progress may be carried out by the modern Zoroastrians or Parsees.

Two Theories in the
matter of the Pro-
gress of the World.

There are two theories in the matter of the Progress of the world: viz (1) Whether there was first the Revelation of Truth and then degeneration, or, (2) Whether there was, at

1 Vendidad IX 51, 53, 55, 57.

2 Yaçna IX, 17 3 Visparad XX, 1 4 Yaçna LV, 8

5 Yaçna LXVIII, 2

first, a low state of affairs, and then, with the advance of time, there was progress and elevation.

Among the ancients, St. Paul was eminently one who held the first belief. He said, there was the Revelation of Truth at first by God to the primitive men, and then degeneration gradually set in. According to him, the modern savages are the types of those who have degenerated. Among the moderns, Sir W. M. Ramsay, is one who supports St. Paul's views.¹

The three principles, spoken of as "The three Pauline principles," on which St. Paul, Sir W. M. Ramsay and those who hold this view rest, are :—

1. "The Divine alone is real : all else is error.
2. A Society, or a Nation, is progressive, in so far as it hears the Divine voice : all else is degeneration".
3. "All men and every human society can hear the Divine voice; but they must co-operate ere the communication can take place."²

The second view is held by modern scientists, who say, that Religion has developed and evolved from savage fetishism. Sir W. Ramsay opposes this view, and says: If the early people were in their infancy in matters of religion and knowledge, how could they build such magnificent buildings, and have such a perfect system of agriculture as we see among their works. The ancients had "marvellous potentialities."³ You cannot expect them to be savages in religion. If so, the modern savage, whom you call a primitive man, must possess these "marvellous potentialities". But he does not. So this shows degeneration. The modern savages are

¹ Vide his article on "St. Paul's Philosophy of History" in the *Contemporary Review* of September 1907, p. 327 et seq.

² *Ibid.* pp. 332-33.

³ *Contemporary Review* of September 1907. p. 239.

the "signs and fruits of degeneration."¹ If not the modern view, at least one of the modern views, of religion is this: "Religion begins in magic and gradually elevates itself to a higher stage of thought".² "On the contrary" says Sir W. Ramsay, "The view to which I have found myself gradually driven is that magic is the degradation of primitive religion".³ From this reasoning, Sir W. Ramsay concludes, that in ancient ritualistic rites, there was "wisdom and usefulness."⁴ Latterly, these were lost and there was degeneration. "Much of that healthy teaching which was enforced on all as obligatory religious ceremonial has ceased in modern time to be known to or practised by the poor and ill-educated classes. This wide-spread ignorance and neglect of the fundamental principles on which comfort, health and happiness in life depend, is now a serious danger, even amongst the most civilized nations It would be easy to quote cases in which modern Christian missionaries have done grave injuries to their converts by forbidding them to continue old and wise sanitary practices because they had been enforced by pagan religious law and took the form of service to a pagan deity.

Our Parsee books seem to point to the modern theory, that there was a low state of affairs at first, for example, in the time of Kaiyomars, Siâmuck, Hoshang and others, and that there was gradual improvement by the efforts of Soshyants, like Hoshang, Jamshed, Faredun and others, and lastly, by Zoroaster, as the last of the prophets.

1 Ibid p. 341.

2 Ibid p. 341

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid p. 342,

5 Ibid pp. 342-43. Goethe, in his auto-biography, says, that he "happened to advocate the people" whom the Missionaries sought to convert and that he "preferred their primitive state." He does not give his reasons, but perhaps, they were the same as those which lead Sir W. Ramsay to his conclusion. "Memoires of Goethe," written by himself (1824), Vol. II, p. 117.

Again, our theory of the Frasho-kêrêti, which aims at a final good state of affairs, supports this theory. But, against this view, it may be said, that all this refers to the present cycle of time which begins with Kaiomars.

But whatever the theory may be, without entering deeper into the question, we find, that according to both the theories, there is the necessity of improvement and progress from a state of degeneracy, whether it be an original state, or, one brought about later.

In the great work of Progress, we cannot make any Reform, a plank proper or real advance without resort-
in the work of ing to some Reform. Reform is the princi-
progress. pal plank in the structure of Progress.

Without that, we cannot proceed. Please note, that I take the word Reform in its literal appropriate sense. At times, a mere change from the existing state, passes under the head of reform. It is such changes, mere changes, which are, at times, from good to bad, that bring about the blessed name of "reform" into disrepute. So, let us understand the word in its literal sense, which gives the proper meaning of the word. To *reform* is to *form again*, what is *deformed*. If any thing, that is well-formed at first, is *deformed*, or put out of its real form, we must re-form it. So, a true *reform* is a change from bad to good. True reform does not necessarily mean a change in the old order of things which has suited us, and which still suits us under the changed conditions of time, place and circumstances. It is true that true Reform and Progress rest on conservatism. But true conservatism should not mean a blind adherence to the old order of things, even when that old order cannot be adapted to our present conditions of time, place and circumstance. In the broad sense, true Reform sets right, sets in its proper position and form, what is deformed. Without reforming what is deformed in our social, economical or religious condition, we cannot make real progress.

Reform holds the same position in the progress or advancement of a community or nation, as Patet or Repentance in the moral or spiritual progress or advancement of an individual. You must go back (*paiti-ita*) to the position, from which you have sinned and fallen, and then only you can make a real moral progress. You can make no moral or spiritual progress, as long as you are in the path of sin or wrong-doing. So, as long as a community or nation does not reform what is deformed in its social, economical or religious condition, it cannot make real progress. Reform is an unavoidable plank in the advancement of a community.

A thing, whether it be a custom, observance or ceremony, may be deformed in two ways. Firstly, it may, with the flow of time, lose its pristine purity and thus be deformed. Secondly, the time, place and circumstance may change; and so, though the custom or observance, may have retained its pristine purity, it may not suit the changed times, situation and circumstances. So, looking to it from the altered point of view, it may appear to have been deformed. Thus, there are two causes that render customs or observances deformed. (1) The loss of pristine purity and (2) The changed conditions.

Now, the question is, what should we have as our standard for Reform? The safest and the surest reply is: "Do, as Zoroaster himself did." In the declaration of his Articles of Faith a Zoroastrian declares: "*Vâ varanô as Zarathushtrô . . . tâ carenâchâ tkaeshâchâ*" i.e., "I am of that creed which Zarathushtra had". So, in the path of Progress and Reform, our standard should be that of our prophet Zoroaster himself.

The work of all prophets consists of a kind of Reform.

Zoroaster's great work. REFORM Zoroaster's work was eminently so. In spite of the efforts of the preceding Saoshyants at

intervals, some degeneration had crept in. The elements of Dâévayaçnism i.e., the worship of powers other than those of Ahura Mazda, had corrupted pure Mazdayaçnism. The

preceding Mazdayaṇism, like Zoroastrianism, carried men's thoughts from Nature to Nature's God. But, in that conception, Nature was allotted a more prominent place, than what was due to it. The power behind it was placed, or was in danger of being placed, in the back ground. Hence, Zoroaster stepped in and restored order.

Dr. Geiger, who gives us an excellent chapter on "Zarathushtra's Monotheism" ¹, in his "Zarathushtra in the Gathas," thus speaks of Zoroaster's work in this matter :

"That the Reform of Zarathushtra called forth a lively agitation of the mind, that it even gave occasion to bloody combats and wars, is easily understood from the contents of the Gāthās. It broke away almost entirely from all ideas extant before the Gāthic period, and offered in fact something quite new. It placed itself in a conscious opposition to the religion of nature which had been handed down from the old Arian times, and was still cherished by the people; and whatever it took over from the nature-worship and retained in itself, was exalted into a far higher moral sphere and penetrated with its spirit; and thus the form acquired a new substance."

Though the age of Zoroaster is very ancient, according to the Vendidad² there existed several religions in the world at the time. The religion that prevailed in Irân itself, before the time of Zoroaster, is spoken of as the Paoiryô-tkaeshi,³ *lit.* the religion of previous faiths. It was a form of Mazdayaṇism *i.e.* a religion, acknowledging Mazda or the Great Omniscient Lord, as one God. In his work of reform, Zoroaster preserved everything that was good in the old Paoiryô-tkaeshi Mazdayaṇ religion.

1 "Zarathushtra in the Gathas and in the Classics" Chapter. III. translated by Dastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana, p. 28.

2 Chap. V., 22-25.

3 Yaçna Chap. I. 18; XXVI 4; Yasht XIII, 17, 149, 152, 156.

Îrân had seen several Dark ages in the matter of Faith, when foreign elements had entered and degeneration set in, and it required correction and reform at the hands of several prophets, more properly called the Saoshyants *i.e.*, those who benefitted humanity. They, at intervals, reformed what was deformed. Kayomars, Hoshang, Tehmuras, Haoma, Jamshed, Faredun, Kâus and Kai Khusru were such Saoshyants. The efforts of these various Saoshyants, were not long-lived. It was Zoroaster, who, with a strong hand, gave a permanent form and shape to the religion and established a strong monotheistic faith. His Mazdaism is spoken of as Zoroastrian Mazdaism. A modern Zoroastrian in his Articles of faith, calls himself a Zoroastrian Mazdayasnân,

From this picture of Zoroaster's reform, we learn the following facts :

Facts to be learnt
from Zoroaster's way
of reform.

1. He reformed that which was deformed while coming down from olden times.

2. He tried to adapt, as it were, the Irânians to the new changing state of affairs.

3. He adopted from olden times what was good.

4. In this adoption, he exalted whatever he adopted to a higher level.

From the fact of the various commandments and injunctions, which Zoroaster received from the divine beings (the Ameshaspentas), and which he conveyed to mankind, Prof. Jackson says: "We can see that Zoroaster was a civil reformer as well as a spiritual guide."¹

As said above, Zoroaster is spoken by Dr. Geiger as a great reformer. Dr. E. W. West, after giving several references from the Pahlavi writings about "the exact difference between the primeval (paôiryô-tkaêsha) religion and that taught by Zaratûst" says :—

Principles of Zoroaster's Reform in the words of Dr. West.

1 "The Cosmopolitan" of January 1900, p. 352.

“From these statements we may conclude that the old writers, who have handed down these legends from ancient times, were of opinion that Zarathushtra was not so much the founder of a totally new religion, as he was a reformer who retained as much of the prior religion as was not seriously objectionable. While strongly insisting upon the necessity of reverencing all good spirits, he strictly prohibited all propitiation of evil spirits. His law was to resist and destroy all that is evil and injurious to man, and to respect and to honour all that is good and beneficial to him.”

Here, we get an idea of the standard of reform. Here are briefly stated the principles of Zoroaster's reform—reform in religion and reform in customs and manners. The principle as regards religion was: Revere Ahura Mazda, the Omiscient Lord and His Yazatas, the good spirits. In other words, observe Mazdayacnism and shun Daevayacnism.

The principle as regards customs and observances, whether religious or social, was: Respect and honour all that is good and beneficial to mankind in what has come down to you from the past. Resist and destroy all that you find evil and injurious to man.

These are the principles, which have guided our Prophet, and which have, after him, more or less, guided our ancestors. These are the principles which should guide us, his modern disciples, the modern Zoroastrians. As far as the grand principles of religion are concerned, generally speaking, there has not been any difference in our belief or faith. We have preserved the pristine purity of that faith. We believe in the great Ahura Mazda, in his Omnipotence, Omnipresence and Omniscience; we believe in his Ameshaspentas and Yazatas or good spirits, that are his creation. We believe in a Future life and in a future state of bliss or misery that depends on our conduct in life. We believe

We have adhered to grand principles.

in the several doctrines, and we observe the ritual and ceremonies, which are connected with, and which help, these fundamental beliefs. Ignorance, now and then, and that among women, whose influence in the Parsee house-hold is strong, has, at times, led some, here and there, in India, to a belief in evil spirits requiring some propitiation; but that has always been put down by the elders of the community.

Coming to the customs and observances, both religious and social, we find, that there has been a difference and that on a grand scale. First of all, let us look to the religious customs and observances. We do not observe in India, now a days, many of the customs, enjoined in the Vendidad and in some Pahlavi books, and observed at some time in ancient Irân. Not only are they not observed by us here, but some of them are not observed even by our Persian co-religionists, who have stuck to their ancient fatherland. Some of the customs, enjoined in the Vendidad, appear to have been more honoured in their breach than in their observance in Irân itself in the glorious days of our Sassanian Empire. They seem to have suited the times of our early ancestors when they lived, more or less, as small pastoral, and then latterly, as small agricultural communities, in detached villages; but, when they concentrated in busy commercial towns, of which there were several in the Sassanian times, they seem to have appeared unsuitable.

Typical instances of change in customs, referring to (a) Birth, (b) Marriage (c) and Death.

In the social life of a person, Birth, Marriage and Death are the principal events. Let us take, at first, the case of an ancient custom as regards the first of these events, viz., Birth.

(a) On referring to the Vendidad¹, we find, that a woman, who had given birth to a still-born child, had to submit to a custom, which our ancestors have, long ago, done away with.

¹ Vendidad V, 45 et seq.

She was asked to have, three days after delivery, a ceremonial bath in an open place, a bath resembling that of the Bare-shnûm, gone through by priests now a days. Our ancestors have long since abandoned that custom, adhering to the spirit of the injunction which aimed at the sanitary cleanliness of the woman.

(b) Then take the case of the second event, the most important event in a man's life *viz.*, Marriage. In the Paiwand-nâmoh or the Ashirwâd prayer, recited at the marriage, we have reference to the custom of a marriage gift of 3,000 silver dirams and two gold dinârs and, that in the coinage of the mint of Nishâpur. Though the recital is made at all marriages even now in India, the marriage gift has varied in quantity and quality. Our ancestors adhered in this matter also to the spirit but not to the letter.

(c) Coming to customs in connection with Death, we find, that the Vendidad¹ enjoined, that after the exposure of the body on the summit of a hill, and after the flesh was devoured by birds and dogs, the bones were to be collected and preserved in *astodâns* or receptacles of stone, mortar or such other materials. The Pahlavi Dadistân-i Dini² also refers to this custom. Hirototus³ and Strabo⁴ also refer to it. Our ancestors, have, long since, given up both the customs above referred to, *viz.*, that of letting the flesh of the body be eaten by dogs, and that of preserving the bones in separate receptacles. In the modern Towers of Silence, we have preserved the spirit of the injunctions, as far as they are held to be salutary, but not the letter.

1 Chap. VI 49-51. (2) Question XVII, Chap. XVIII. Vide my "Anthropological Papers" pp. 7-22, and 295-306, for my Papers on Astodân. Vide journal Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol I No. 7, pp. 426-41; Vol. VIII, No. 5, pp. 331-342. (3) Bk. I, 140. 4 Bk. XV Ch. III, 20.

First principle.
Adaptation to the
changed conditions
of time, place and
circumstance, neces-
sary for progress,

Several other instances of this kind may be found, but I have illustrated what I have to say by one instance in the case of each of the three principal events in a man's life, *viz.* Birth, Marriage and Death. These instances show, that generally, our ancestors, both of Irân and India, have, from time to time, abandoned those customs, which, however necessary, suitable or good in themselves at the time of their origin, have not been found suitable to the changed conditions of time, place and circumstances. Wherever desirable, they have adhered to the spirit of the injunctions and not to the letter, and, doing away with unnecessary old customs, have taken to, and substituted, new ones. We, the descendants of those ancestors, following their example in adopting the principle of reform as taught by Zoroaster, should, on our part, be prepared to part with such customs as may not suit our conditions and may do harm. We all have, naturally, to a certain extent, some reverence for all that is old, but that reverence must be confined to all that is old and good. All that is old is not gold. Of all the beliefs and customs that came down to him from the previous *Paoiryô-tkaêshi* religion, Zoroaster preserved all that was good and did away with all that was bad. That must be our position as regards our customs. These considerations suggest to us the first principle in the path of progress, *viz.*, that we must always be prepared to adapt ourselves to the changed conditions of time, place and circumstances.

Second principle.
Reverence for, and
loyalty to, all that
is good in the past.

The second principle, which suggests itself to us, makes us turn to the other side of the picture. First of all, we must always look with respect towards the past, and must not be carried away with any arrogant thought that we are always wiser than our ancestors. As a learned writer says: "It is surely the height of arbitrariness to assume that we are

wiser merely because we are later, or that the civilizations which have perished therefore deserved to perish. There is retgression as well as progress in history, and Tel-el-Amarna, Susa, Knossos should teach us that the extinction of a culture may cost the human race very dear and compel it to learn many things in religion, jurisprudence, and art all over again before it can take up the thread of 'Progress' at the point to which the displaced peoples had brought it."¹

M. Renan, pleading for a reverend attitude towards the past.

Even a person like the late learned M. Renan, who was a man of very progressive thoughts and who was rather looked at as a heretic in religious matters, especially after the publication of his "Vie de Jesus" in 1863, gives us good advice in such matters. As said by the above writer, he "mediated between the old school and now" and "pleaded for a more reverent attitude towards the past. . . . It would be no bad way of learning charity to our neighbours to begin by learning it towards our ancestors."² Renan looked to the future with a hopeful longing, but with a loving respect for the past, and said: "J'aime le passé, mais, je porte envie à l'avenir." He looked with distrust and anxiety at all that the modern age discarded of the past, whether good or bad, and said: "I fear that the work of the twentieth century will consist in taking out of the waste basket a multitude of the excellent ideas which the nineteenth century has heedlessly thrown into it."

Following the advice of such liberal minded great men, we must, not only revere the past, but must adhere to all that is good in it. Like our prophet and our wise ancestors, we must adhere to those customs that are good in themselves.

1 Mr. J. H. Morgan in "The Nineteenth Century and After" of March 1914, p. 550.

2 Ibid p. 551.

3 Ibid p. 552.

The mere fact of a custom being old, should not necessarily lead us to be inclined to the belief, that it must be out of time and out of place.

Typical instances
of old customs
worth observing.

Let us take, in the order of the above-mentioned three events in a man's life, some instances to illustrate what I say.

(a) In the case of the birth customs, a custom, enjoined by the spirit of the original injunction, requires, that the woman after delivery may remain, to a certain extent, isolated. That is a good sanitary injunction, not only from the standpoint of the health of the woman herself, but also from that of the health of other women in such condition. In a book, entitled "Nationalization of Health", in the chapter on "Perils of Maternity", we read the following :—

"It is now generally agreed that puerperal fever is infectious, always depending on the introduction of microscopic organisms from without¹ ... In England and Wales 4500 women die every year in childbirth. According to the most reliable statistics about 70 per cent. of this mortality is due to puerperal fever... Almost the whole of this mortality might be avoided²... Our private practitioners are often overworked, and consequently apathetic. They are subject to no inspection³... Under these circumstances, the results which we actually find are not surprising⁴."

What the writer means is, that some medical men, careless of the rules of cleanliness, carry infection from one woman to another and cause unnecessary deaths. If that is so in Europe that has advanced much in sanitary science, how much more so it should in be our country. This modern sanitary view shows the wholesomeness of our old salutary custom, which enjoins that a woman in confinement should remain isolated and that others may not come into

1 "Nationalization of Health" by Havelock Ellis, p. 125

2 Ibid. p 131

3 Ibid. pp 134—5

4 Ibid pp 135—36

any careless contact with her, lest that may endanger many lives.¹

(b) Coming to the event of marriage, we find, that now-a-days, we are doing away with several customs and ceremonies which may be taken as unnecessary. But, with a removal of this kind of customs, we do away with some good ones as well. For example, the Hand-fastening ceremony (𐬔𐬀𐬭𐬀𐬎𐬌). If marriage is a contract to be confirmed by religious rites, let this ceremony remain in some form, whereby, the officiating priest can unite the hands of both, thus symbolically uniting them in marriage. It is an old solemn ceremony observed in many communities.²

(c) In the case of some of our death customs, the late Prof. Darmesteter has very properly pointed out the sanitary significance of these. He said: "The axiom Cleanliness is next to Godliness, shall be altogether Zoroastrian with this difference, that in Zoroastrianism, Cleanliness is a form of itself Godliness".³ Again, speaking about these customs, he said: "one can see that they are summed up in two words—two words of the hygienist: (1) to isolate the centre of infection and (2) to destroy this centre".⁴

Looking to these sanitary points of view, some of our funeral customs are wholesome and good. For example, the one, which enjoins that the friends and relations who attend the funeral should have a bath, or, at least, should wash the exposed portions of their body before going to their usual avocations. It is a good sanitary injunction, which now begins to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

1 Vendidad chap V, 45-48.

2 Vide my "Marriage Customs of the Parsees," for this custom.

3 "*Cleanliness* est une forme même de *Godliness*." Le Zend Avesta II. Introduction, p. X.

4 "Isoler le centre d'infection, détruire ce centre." Ibid, p. XII.

Another instance of a sanitary custom being carelessly thrown off.

While speaking of some of our old sanitary customs, I may here refer to another custom which is being carelessly thrown away. It is our old custom, resting upon sanitary principles, that one should not drink from a cup from which another person has drunk. This is a very good custom from a sanitary point of view, but it is sad to find that it is not properly observed. While we modern Parsees are abandoning this whole-some custom, European Sanitary scholars begin to recommend it. Lately, there has been a general suggestion for the schools of England, that every child attending the school should have its own cup for drink, so that it may not drink from another's cup. We read the following on the subject.

“ Individual drinking cup for children.

“ An educational journal contains a warning against the common drinking cup in school, as a means of infective contact. The children should be instructed to provide themselves with individual drinking cups. Parents must be given to understand that if the child does not have a drinking cup, it will not be possible to drink in school. The mouth of every consumptive contains the germs of the disease, and the transference of these germs from the sick to the healthy child by means of the common drinking cup is the easiest accident possible.”¹

Max Muller on reverant feelings towards old customs.

In these instances, we see, that customs, which are good in themselves, are mercilessly thrown off. Zoroaster's teachings and the practice of our ancestors teach us to do away with what is harmful. In doing away with customs of the above-mentioned kind we do away with what is good. So, as true Zoroastrians, our duty is to reform, what is deformed, to preserve what is good, and to stand against inno-

1 “Godd Health” of September 1905.

variations that may be harmful. Even when we do away with old customs as unsuitable to us, we must look at them and their originators with some reverence, as they were the customs that suited those old times. Prof. Max Muller has well said: "There is a reason at the bottom of every thing however it seems unreasonable to us, in the customs and laws of the ancient-world."¹ We must be inspired with this reverent feeling for the past with the thought, that though the customs and beliefs of our ancestors have become obsolete in our times, we are, as it were, the children, the offspring, the result, the resultant of those customs and beliefs. Our present-day conduct and way of life are unobservedly and unwittingly the result of the life of our fathers, based on, and followed under, the influence of those customs and beliefs. What a learned writer says of symbolism stands good for a similar influence of custom. He says: "The symbolism of today preserves the serious belief of yesterday, and what in an age more or less distant was a vital motive inspiring an appropriate course of conduct *survives in the conduct* it has inspired long after it has itself ceased to be active and powerful."

We all have to move with the times.
 Continuity and Progress. As the French say, "on est toujours un peu de son siècle" (one is always a little of his century). But in such a progress of moving with the times, we must never try to cut ourselves off altogether from the past. "The principle of combining *continuity and progress* is one which underlines all sound development." True reform consists in keeping "the mean between the extremes of too much stiffness in refusing and of too much easiness in admitting variation." True progress and reform rest on conservatism. Prof. Renan has well said "The right men for progress are those who have for the point of

1 Max Muller's Science of Mythology.

starting, a profound respect for the past. All that we do, all that we are, is the result of a century's old work."¹

As Dr. Jones has said, "The true Reformer is the lover of the ancient ways."² "The successful founder of a new régime has always been the devotee of the old. He has been a more ardent disciple and a deeper lover of the ancient ways than others. . . . He has come not to destroy, but to fulfil. He brings to light the better meaning of the ancient faith, and by evolving the present from the past sets free the future. . . . The true reformer is always a generous spirit. So far from feeding on the error, of his time, or condemning its institutions, he takes their part against their lower-selves and declares war only against their corruption."³

Thus, the principles which we Parsees have to adopt, following the teachings of our prophet, teachings repeated and inculcated by the wise men of modern times are :

- 1 To respect the Past while looking to the Future.
- 2 To go after new truths without forsaking the old ones.
- 3 "We owe it as courtesy to our fathers to admire where we will not imitate and to bow where we will not pray."

To bring about this line of conduct we must always meditate on what is good in the Old and in the New.

Progress associated
with Reform.

With the question of Reform, that of Progress is generally associated. We have not only to reform what is deformed but have to make an actual progress. We must reform anything that is deformed

1 Les vrais hommes de progrès sont ceux qui ont pour point de départ un respect profond du passé. Tout ce que nous faisons, tout ce que nous sommes, est l'aboutissant d'un travail séculaire."

2 "Idealism as a Practical Creed" by Dr. Henry Jones, p. 31.

3 Ibid, p. 63.

(a) by the loss of pristine purity and (b) by the changed conditions of time, place and circumstances. Even when there is nothing amiss to reform, we must look towards Progress, necessitated by progressive times and circumstances. We have not only to reform what has become bad, and to turn what is bad into what is good, but we have also to turn what is good to what is better. Therein lies Progress. Whatever adds to our good, to our material, mental and moral good, should be adopted. An existing state of things or an existing custom may be good in itself, and so, it may not require to be reformed, not having been deformed. But, if a better state of things, or a better custom, usage or innovation presents itself, which leads us from "good" to "better" and from "better", to "best", we must adopt it, and therein lies the Progress which is essential for the good of a community.

Sir Oliver Lodge on Progress. Sir Oliver Lodge, whose writings are of a double character, *viz.* that of a moral teacher and that of a man of science, very beautifully suggests the idea of Progress and Reform in the following words, in his chapter on "Suggestions to wards Reform":

"History is familiar enough with obsolete repealed Statutes: Why should the Statutes which regulate so vital a thing as the professed National Religion alone be free from reconsideration and amendment? If non-alteration be regarded as necessitated by some theory,—that theory is a superstition; the only justification for rigid adherence to fixed forms is the practical danger of Science and unsettling of faith that might result from freedom. That is a point of policy on which it is possible for reasonable people to take opposite sides, at any particular juncture or crisis; but it will be generally admitted that a faith dependent on blinkers and fetters for its maintenance is not likely in a progressing age to last many generations. Anchorage to a sub-

merged rock is not safe amid rising waters.”¹

What Sir Oliver Lodge means to say is this :—When there is advancement and progress all round from good to better, it is not wise to rest on old views and customs, saying that they have done us no harm. Such a view will impede our progress, and, if long continued, may bring our fall in the race of life.

A few instances of the views of the last generation on some of the modern questions. • Let us look to the the fact, how we and our fathers have looked to some of the modern industrial and educational questions of the past and present century.

(a) It is said, that when steam was first introduced in our country, some of our community objected, at first, to our people working on steam-engines in the factories and on the steamers and railways, saying, that in that work, one had, at times, to pour water on, and extinguish, fire which we always held in reverence. Fortunately for our people, that objection did not stand long. Otherwise, our progress as a community would have been marred. Many of our co-religionists now are fortunately connected with a large part of the textile industry of the country and many are serving on railway and steamer lines. Any persistent adherence to the above view of respect towards fire, however laudable at one time, would have come in our way of progress. The view we have now to take is this : Whatever that enhances the use of fire for the advancement of mankind is a step in the direction of advancing our esteem for fire.

(b) As another instance, take the case of medical education. The teachings of our Vendidad hold a dead human body as naçâ (𐬨𐬀𐬎𐬌) from naç 𐬨𐬀𐬎𐬌 𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀 Lat. *nec-are*, *noc-ere* 𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀 𐬨𐬀𐬎𐬌 to perish) i. e. a perishing substance to be avoided, which otherwise may bring destruction. The teaching is good from

1 “Man and the Universe” by Sir Oliver Lodge p. 97.

a sanitary point of view. But, it is said that, instead of looking to it from that point of view, and instead of looking to the *spirit* of the teaching, some of our people, at first, looked to the *letter* of the teaching. So, they did not like the idea of our young men joining the Medical College, when it was first established in our city about 60 years ago, because they had to touch for study dead bodies in the adjoining Sir Jamsetjee Hospital. Fortunately for us, the religious prejudice did not last long. Had it continued, one of the best fields, wherein many of our young men have made money and name, would have been lost to us.

(c) As another instance, take the case of Electric lighting which has been recently introduced in our city. Out of the feelings of respect and reverence in which our people held fire, upto a few years ago generally, and even now in some cases and in some places specially, our people did not extinguish lamps in the ordinary way. They cut off the burning portion of the wick from the stem, or removed the whole of the burning wick, and placed it in a fire-place, to be burnt off with the fire. To blow the lamps, was thought to be irreligious. So, the only kind of lamps burnt in the fire-temples were oil lamps which admitted of the use of wicks. Gas lamps and electric lamps were not used, as they did not admit of the above traditional way of extinguishing lamps which spoke of *jot mā jot melarvi* (જોતમાં જોત મેલવવા) i.e. of mixing a burning wick with a burning wick or fire. The suggestions to introduce gas at first and electric light latterly in our fire-temples was strenuously opposed. But what do we see now? Within this one year or two, we find with satisfaction, that some of our Fire-temples are now supplied with beautiful electric light. The temples, which are expected to be the seats and centres of mental and spiritual light, are not now without abundant physical light.

There are a number of such instances, which show that our forefathers, and we, following their footsteps, have wisely tried to adapt ourselves to the exigencies of changing times

and circumstances. New times and new circumstances bring, as it were, new messages. Following the spirit of the teachings of Zoroaster, our great Messenger of the remote old time, we may, after due careful inquiry, receive unhesitatingly these new "growing messages" in a broad-minded manner.

A suggestive question of Prof. Max Muller.

The late Prof. Max Muller once said thus of our religion : "Though every religion is of real and vital interest in its earliest state only, yet its later development too, with all its misunderstandings, faults and corruptions, offers many an instructive lesson to the thoughtful student of history. Here is a religion, one of the most ancient of the world, once the state religion of the most powerful empire, driven away from its native soil, deprived of political influence, without even the prestige of a powerful or enlightened priesthood, and yet professed by a handful of exiles—men of wealth, intelligence and moral worth in Western India—with an unhesitating fervour such as is seldom to be found in larger religious communities. It is well worth the earnest endeavour of the philosopher and the divine to discover, if possible, the spell by which this apparently effete religion continues to command the attachment of the enlightened Parsees of India, and makes them turn a deaf ear to the allurements of the Brahmanic worship and the earnest appeals of Christian missionaries".¹

Our answer to the inquiry, suggested by Max Muller, to discover the spell should be this : Ad-

Our Reply. hering to the stable elements of our religion, we change the unstable ones and adapt ourselves to the changing conditions of time, place, and circumstances. Like all other religions we have two elements in our religion, the stable and the unstable.

The stable elements consist of (a) those that are common to all good religions and (b) of those that are special. We

¹ Paper on "The Modern Parsees" 'Chips from a German Workshop' (1880), Vol. I, p. 164.

frevently believe in the common elements—1 The Existence of God as an Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent Power; 2 A Future Life; and 3 The Moral Responsibility for our conduct in life. We all believe in the special doctrines and teachings of our religion, with some difference of opinion here and there, as to, in what light or sense those teachings may be taken. For a few examples of these special teachings, take the case of belief in the following: (a) Two Powers—Spenta-mainyush and Angra-mainyush, spirits of Advancement and Retrogression—both working under the direction of God with the final lofty ideal of Spentamainyu prevailing over Angramainyu. (b) The Amesha spentas, Yazatas and Farohars as some High Intelligent Powers created by Ahura Mazda. (c) The Judgment, on the third day after death, for our conduct in this world. (d) Frasho-kereti or Frashogard, which provides for everybody's advancement and for a general advancement in a Future state of life—advancement to an Ideal High state of life. (e) Respect for Fire as an emblem of Divinity, &c.

Among the unstable or changing elements of our religion, are our religious customs and observances. We try to adapt ourselves to the exigencies of changing times, places and circumstances.

Thus, the spell, referred to by Max Muller, lies in this, that our tendency of adaptation keeps us free to advance in the path of the world's progress and does not hamper our way. With all respect and reverence for all that is good in our old religion and in our old religious customs and observances, we are free to welcome with an open hand, all that is good in the "growing messages" brought to us, from time to time, by Science or Philosophy.

Progress is the perception of truth. So, it must be gradual, progressing with each perception of truth. It must be in touch with the old. One of Comte's favourite apothegms is: "Progress is the development of order," Harrison thus explains the

Comte's Apothegm
about Progress.

apothegm: "All true and effective advance and improvement is the resultant of elements previously co-ordinated and capable of growth. Every thing we know in Nature, in Man, and in Society is *evolved* out of antecedent elements—but is neither transformed into new elements—nor does it ever arise spontaneously unprepared or *de novo*.¹"

I will now sum up what I have said: Following the
 Summary. teachings of our Prophet and the laudable
 practice of our ancestors, we must not hold,

that every thing that is old is gold. Similarly, we must not hold, that every thing that glitters as new is gold. We must oppose all that has under the changed circumstances, become harmful in the old. Similarly, we must resist the admission of all that is harmful in the new. Every thing that is good in the old must be respected and honoured and cherished as gold. True progress rests on conservatism. "*Festina Lente*" i. e. "Hasten slowly" is a golden proverb. Every thing that is good in the new and that leads us from *good* to *better* and from *better* to *best*, may be welcomed as gold.

1 "The Philosophy of Common Sense" by Harrison Introduction, p. XXXIV.

ANGELOLOGY.

A few traits common to Zoroastrianism, Hebrewism and Christianity.

As Dr. Kohut says in his Jewish Angelology, "The belief in the existence of superior beings, endowed with a perfect spiritual disposition, was in ancient times a commonly prevalent one. In reality even the great progressive range of existence, that rises up from the inanimate stone to human beings leads to the assumption, that over these there must be existing again a class of beings, with superior intellectual endowments to those of mankind—an assumption, against which even from the standpoint of modern thought there is nothing to object."

The modern thought referred to by Dr. Kohut is typified in the Theory of Evolution. It suggests that, in the order of existence there can be no great gap between Man and God. Highly developed souls of this world have the probability of further progress and advancement in the line of evolution in the life after death. Angelic life is the higher development of the human life of a soul. The Avestaic philosophy of the Fravashis or Farohars beautifully permits the acceptance of the theory of evolution.

Prof. Fiske says on this point: "From the first dawning of life we see all things working together towards one mighty goal, the evolution of the most exalted spiritual qualities which characterise humanity. Has all this work been done for nothing? Is it all ephemeral, all a bubble that

1 The Jewish Angelology and Demonology based upon Parsism", by Dr. Alexander Kohut, translated from the German by Mr. K. R. Cama, p. 1.

2 "The Destiny of Man" p. 113.

bursts, a vision that fades? On such a view the riddle of the Universe becomes a riddle without a meaning. The more thoroughly we comprehend that process of evolution by which things have come to be what they are, the more we are likely to feel that to deny the everlasting persistence of the spiritual element in man is to rob the whole process of its meaning." Thus then, when even modern thought has nothing serious to object against the existence of angels, there is no wonder, if we see the belief in their existence common among the ancient Zoroastrians, Hebrews and Christians.

What strikes one is the similarity of the ideas about these angels in the Scriptures, in the later books and in the sacred and legendary art of these nations. The similarity is due to the fact, that the ancient Jews were long under the influence of the ancient Zoroastrians. Many eminent scholars have dwelt upon this subject. As this is not the object of this paper, I will not dwell upon it. The object of this paper is simply to present a few traits of this similarity.

Traits of Similarity. Zoroastrian Hierarchy.	Zoroastrian hierarchy, as represented in Parsee books, places Ahura Mazda, the Omniscient Lord, at the head of all. Among the spiritual intelligences under him, the Amesha-Spentas (lit. the Immortal Bountiful ones) stand first. Next to them come the Yazatas (lit. those that are worthy of adoration). Then, lastly come the Fravashis or the Farohars.
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1 Seven Higher Intelligences,	Firstly, as to the Amesha Spentas or Archangels, the Zoroastrian Scriptures say, that they are seven ¹ in number.
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1. Ahura-Mazda.
2. Vohu-mana.
3. Asha-vahishta.
4. Khshathra-vairya.

¹ Hapta Amesha-Spenta. Haptan Yasht.. Yasht II, 12.

5. Spenta-ârmaiti.
6. Haurvatât.
7. Ameretât.

Similarly, the Jews have seven Shadim or Archangels. They are the following:—

1. Michael.
2. Gabriel.
3. Raphael.
4. Uriel.
5. Chamuel.
6. Japhiel.
7. Zadkiel.

The Christians also speak of seven Archangels or the seven Spirits of God.¹

"The Seven who in God's presence nearest to his throne
Stand ready at command".

Similarly, we find, that the "Divine Powers" of the Neo-Platonic Philosophy of Philo Judæus corresponded to the Amesh-spentas of the Zoroastrians. These "Divine Powers" stood "closest to the Self-existent".² They are six in number. Including the Self-existent, their number was

1 "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood, a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth." Revelation V. 6. "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues," Ibid XV. 1 ; vide also Ibid 6 to 7; VIII, 2; XVI, 1; Zechariah IV, 10.

"The seven holy angels.....which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One." The Apocryphal Book of Tobit ch. XII, 15, "Septem angelis sanctis, qui adsistimus et conversamur ante claritatem Dei" (The Book of Tobit, edited by Ad. Neubauer, (1878) p. LXXXVI. Cf. Milton.

2 "Philo Judæus or the Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy", by Dr. James Drummond (1888), Vol. II, pp. 82-83.

seven. The Gnostics also taught that the Universe was created by the Seven Great Angels.

In some parts of the Avesta, Ahura-Mazda, which is the name of the Almighty Omniscient Lord, is not counted in the list of the seven Amesha-Spentas. In that case,¹ for example in the Ahura-Mazda Yasht, the number of the Zoroastrian Amesha-spentas is six. The same is the case with the Jewish Arch-angels. Dr. Kohut says on this subject: "It is worth observing, that the fluctuation between the number six or seven of the Amesha-spentas, indeed, according to as Ahuro-mazdao is counted or not in the class of the Amesha-spentas of Yasht I, 36³; 2, 1-6 recurs also in the Jewish scriptures. Thus the so-called Jerusalem Targum to Deuter. 34, 6 and the book of Enoch c. 20, where the list of 'watching Angels' is counted up, gives only six; the Book of Tobit 12, 15 and of Enoch c. 90, 21 give seven as the number of the Archangels. The latter is probably the more correct assumption, which then corresponds even to the Christian seven Archangels."²

According to Zoroastrianism, the Ameshaspands or Archangels preside over moral qualities, which are the principal attributes of Ahura-Mazda. Plutarch thus refers to the Ameshaspands and the Divine attributes over which they preside:—

"Oromasdes sprung out of the purest light; among all things perceived by the senses that element most resembles him; Areimanios sprang out of darkness, and is therefore

1 Yasht I, 25

2 Spiegel, Yt I, 37; Westergaard Yt, I, 25

3 "The Jewish Angelology and Demonology, based upon Parsian", translated from the German of Dr. Alexander Kohut, by K. R. Cama p. 4n.

of the same nature with it. Oromasdes, who resides as far beyond the sun, as the sun is far from the earth, created six gods (the six Ameshaspentas, now Amshaspendas, "the archangels"), the god of benevolence (Vohu-manô "good mind", now called Bahman); the god of truth (Ashavahishta or Ardibahisht); the god of order (Khshathra-vairya or Shahrivar); the god of wisdom (Armaiti, or Isfendarmad); and the god of wealth and delight in beauty (Haurvatât and Ameretât, or Khordâd and Amerdâd). But to counterbalance him, Areimanôis created an equal number of gods counteracting those of Oromasdes. Then Oromasdes decorated heaven with stars, and placed the star Sirius (Tishtrya, or Tistar) at their head as a guardian. Afterwards he created twenty-four other gods and set them in an egg; but Areimanios forthwith created an equal number of gods, who opened the egg; in consequence of this, evil is always mingled with good".¹

The Jewish and Christian scriptures also represent their Archangels as possessing the principal attributes of God. Their very names indicate this fact. Thus,

Michael signifies one "Like to God".

Gabriel ,, "The strength of God"

Raphael ,, "The healing of God"

Uriel ,, "The destroyer of the enemy who
does not walk in the path of God."

Chamuel ,, "One who sees God"

Jéphiel ,, "The beauty of God".

1 As quoted in Haug's *Essays on the Parsis*, 2nd edition, pp. 9-10.

Zadkiel signifies one "The Righteous of God"¹

These Christian Archangels bear, in these long names, the very name of God (El, Arabic Allah).

In the Zoroastrian Hierarchy, referred to above, Ahura-Mazda who stands at the head, is himself, at times, one of the Amesha-Spentas, and, with them, forms a group of seven. The seven Amesha-Spentas, in their turn, are also the Yazatas or Yazads, thirty of which have given their names to the thirty days of a Parsee month. Next to Ahura Mazda, the Amesha-Spentas and the Yazatas, come the Fravashis or Farohars. According to the Zoroastrian books, all those who stand higher in the above hierarchy have their Fravashis or Farohars (guiding spirits). Thus, Ahura-Mazda, who is the Creator of all the material and spiritual Beings, and who, in turn, is an Amesha-Spenta and also an Yazata, has also a Farohar. All the Amesha-Spentas have their own Farohars. All the Yazatas have their own Farohars. The above order shows, that next to the Amesha-spentas, stand the Yazatas or Yazads. Among the Jews and the Christians also, the angels stand next in order to the Archangels.

As to the number of Yazatas or angels, according to the Khorshed Nyâish, they are hundreds and thousands (Satem-

1 "The Christian Lore of Angels" by Rev. R. L. Gales, in the *National Review* of September 1910, Vol. LVI pp. 111-13. Vide also "The Jewish Angelology and Demonology, based on Parsism", by Dr. Kohut, translated by K. R. Cama, Part II, p. 3. Dr. Kohut identifies Michael with the Persian Vohumanô, Gabriel with Sraosha, and Uriel with Kharenô (khareuanga of the Zamyâd Yas't.) I have shown elsewhere, that Michael can be better identified with Mithra, whom Dr. Kohut identifies with Mithon (Vide my Paper on "St. Michael of the Zoroastrians: a Couparison", in my "Anthropological Papers, pp. 173-96. Vide *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. VI, No. 5, pp. 237-53). Again Khareno is not an angel or Yazata,

cha hazanghremcha).¹ According to the Psalms², the Christian angels also are thousands. We read therein:—"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in the holy place of Senai".³

We find the following points of similarity between the above Psalm of the Christians which speaks of "thousands of angels" and the Khorshed Nyâish of the Zoroastrians which speaks of thousands of Yazatas or angels.

Points of similarity between the Psalm of the Morning-Prayer and the Khorshed Nyâish.

(a) The Psalm is a Morning Prayer of the Christians. Similarly, the Khorshed Nyâish, though recited during all the hours of the sun-lit day, is especially a Morning-Prayer.

(b) Just as the Lord among the Christians is one of the thousands of angels, so Ahura-Mazda among the Zoroastrians is one of the thousand Yazatas or angels. He is at the head of all.

(c) The Christian Morning-Prayer refers to a mountain, the Senai, as a holy place of the Lord. The Zoroastrian Morning-Prayer refers to a mountain, the Saokant, of which it speaks as one created by Ahura Mazda (Mazda-dhâtem).⁴

Besides these three points of similarity, referred to in the above-quoted passage of the Christian Psalm, we find the following other points in the two Morning Prayers.

(d) God is spoken of in the Christian hymn as riding "upon the heavens," (s. 4) as it were, upon a horse. In the

1 Khorshed Nyâish 11; Khorshed Yasht, Yt. VI. 1.

2 Psalm LXVIII, 17. 3 "The Book of Psalms" by Frank C. Papè, p. 118 gives "as in Sinai, in the holy place."

4 Khorshed Nyâish, 8

Khorshed Nyâish, the Sun, the most splendid symbol of the Divinity, is spoken of as riding over a swift steed (*aurvat-aspem*).¹

(e) The Psalm speaks of God as having twenty thousand chariots (s. 17). The Khorshed Yasht (s. 6) speaks of the Sun, the symbol of the Divinity, as having a thousand ears and ten thousand eyes. Mithra, the Yazata of Light, who is a colleague of Khorshed, is spoken of in the Meher Yasht as *rathashtâr* i. e. one who fought on chariots. Meher is spoken of as having a *Vâshu*² i. e. a carriage or chariot.

(f) The very style of the Psalm, in some of its parts, strikes one as resembling the style of a part of the Khorshed Nyâish. For example, it is said (s. 1) that when God arises, and when he goes forth before the people, the enemies are scattered and (s. 8) the earth shakes, gracious rain falls upon earth (s. 9) &c. This reminds us of that part of the Khorshed Nyâish (ss. 11-13) which says that when the Sun rises, various beneficial results follow, such as that of purifying the waters of seas, streams and rivulets.

There is a Christian belief that every soul has "a guardian Spirit, a genius or demon", which always attends it. This reminds us of one of the Zoroastrian Fravashi or Farohar which every living object is believed to have. But it is the Zoroastrian Kharenangh or Khoreh³ which more resembles the Christian genius, demon or guiding spirit. The book of the "Revelations of Sister Catherine Emmerich" says that "when Jesus fell in weakness . . . his

1 Khorshed Nyâish 6

2 Meher Yasht, 129,

3 This Kharenangh or Khoreh is spoken of as Farr-i-yazadi or the Divine splendour by later writers. •

demon abandoned him."¹ Similarly, Firdousi says of King Jamshed, that, on his downfall, the farr-i-Yazdân left him.² According to the Pahlavi Kâr-nâmak-i-Ardeshir Babegân, this *khârenangh*, *khoreh* or *farr* accompanied the victorious Ardeshir wherever he went. According to Firdousi, it enabled Kaikhosru to cross a deep river safely, when pursued by his maternal grandfather Afrasiab during his flight from Turan to Iran.

According to the Hebrew and Christian books, angels "have power over earth and air and water." According to Zoroastrian books also, different Yazatas or angels preside over different useful objects of Nature. Thus, Spenta Ârmaiti or Spendârmad presides over earth. Guâd (Vâta) presides over air and wind. Âbân presides over water. Just as the Hebrews and Christians have a "Prince (angel) of Fire," the Zoroastrians have their angel Âtar presiding over fire. The Christian word, 'Prince,' applied to the angel which has power over fire, reminds us of the word Shâh i.e. King, used in connection with sacred consecrated fires known as Âtash Adarân and Âtash Beharâm.³

Christian angels are represented as flying with wings like birds. Similarly, Zoroastrian angels are represented as flying with wings. For example, the angel Beharâm is represented

1 Rev R.L. Gales's article, entitled "The Christian Lore of Angels" in the National Review of September 1910, Vol. VI p. 113.

2 چو این گفته شد فر یزدان ازوی
گست جهان شد پراز گفتگری

Vullers's *Shahname* Vol. I, p. 27, *complet* 77.

i. e. When he said these words, the farr-i-yazdân left him and the world became full of all kind of talk.

3 Â-darân shah pirouzgar i.e. the Sacred Fires, the victorious kings. (Âtash Nyâish.)

as flying like a bird (*mérégahê kehpa vâvagnahê*).¹

The Christian symbolism of the feathers of a bird signifies a kind of protection. Similarly, we read in the Zoroastrian Behrâm Yasht, that the feather of the bird gives help and support (*upastâm meregahê pareno meregandm.*)²

Christian angels are represented as moving like brave men, and, at times, as striking terror by their presence. For example, in the New Testament, we thus read of the angel who declares the resurrection of Christ.

“His countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow ;

“And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men”.³

In the Yashts, the Zoroastrian angels also are represented as being brave and striking terror into the hearts of the wicked. For example, the angel Mithra is represented as a warrior, striking terror among the Daêvas or the evil-minded with his weapons.⁴

In the ancient Christian liturgies, the Cherubim, who stand eighth in the nine orders of angels,⁵ are spoken of as possessing “many eyes”. Similarly the Zoroastrian angel Mithra is spoken of as possessing “ten thousand eyes.” (*baêvare chashmanem.*)⁶

1 Yasht XIV, 19.

2 Yasht XIV, 36

3 Mathews XXVIII, 3, 4.

4 Meher Yasht, Yt. X 129-132, 143.

5 Angels, Archangels, Virtues, Powers, Princedoms, Dominations, Thrones, Cherubims and Seraphims,

6 Meher Yasht, 7.

THE PRESERVATION AMONG THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS AND IRANIANS OF PARTS OF THE BODY FOR THE PURPOSE OF RESURRECTION.

The Papers and Notes by various scholars, in the Journal of 1911 of the Manchester Oriental Society, on the subject of "Heart and Reins in Mummification and in the Literatures of the Near and Farther East" have suggested to me the subject of this short Note.

In the matter of the belief about the future of the soul, there is a good deal that is common between the ancient Egyptians and the ancient Irânians. I have dwelt at some length on this subject in my paper, entitled "The Belief about the Future of the Soul among the ancient Egyptians and the ancient Irânians." ¹ I have there shown the similarity under the following heads and sub-heads:—

1. The soul was not a simple entity, but a composite one. The spiritual constituents of the soul among the Egyptians were the Ka, Âb, Ba, Sakhem, Sâhû, Khaib, Khu and Osiris. ² The spiritual constituents among the ancient Iranians were Anghu, Daêna, Baôdhangh, Urvâna and Fravashi.

Out of these two sets, the following resembled one another :—

1 Journal of the B. B. R. A. Society, Vol. XIX pp. 365-74. Vide
• my "Asiatic papers," pp. 137-146.

2 Religion of the Ancient Egyptians, by Alfred Wiedemann,
p. 240.

- (a) The Egyptian Ka, which was an indispensable constituent "similar to man and yet not a man," corresponded to the Iranian Fravashî.
- (b) The Egyptian Ab (heart) corresponded to the Irânian Daêna.
- (c) The Egyptian Ba, which, according to Prof. Wiedemann, "corresponded to our idea of the soul", corresponded to the Irânian Urvâna.
- (d) The Egyptian Sekhem, "the personified power of the strength of the deceased", corresponded to the Irânian Anghu, which is replaced in some parts of the Avesta by Tevishi (strength).

2. The Egyptian belief about the judgment of the soul agreed to a great extent with the Irânian belief.

- (a) Osiris, the Egyptian Judge, whose ancient name was Hysiris *i. e.* "many-eyed," resembled Mithra, the Iranian Judge, who also was "a thousand-eyed".
- (b) Both, Osiris and Mithra, were the Divinities of the Sun or Light.
- (c) Both, Osiris and Mithra, held a club-like instrument in their hands as a symbol of authority.
- (d) Both had a weighing scale with them.
- (e) Both had others to assist them in the work of justice. The Egyptian Osiris was helped by Anubis, Horus and Thoth. The Irânian Mithra was helped by Rashna, Âstâd and Râm Khvâstra.
- (f) When the souls went before the Judgment seat, they went reciting some holy words expressive of their feelings.

3. The Egyptians and the Irânians, both believed in Resurrection.

Now, the other important point of similarity, which strikes one, on the perusal of the above papers in the above Journal of the Manchester Oriental Society, is the dedication of some parts of the body after death to different gods or spiritual beings. The idea of some kind of dedication for the purpose of some kind of preservation is common, while the details differ a good deal.

With the idea of preserving the body for the Resurrection, the Egyptians embalmed and preserved, not only the body (the Kha or the Xa), but also the intestines, heart, lungs and liver.¹ These four were given in charge of four gods.

The ancient Iranians, who also believed in Resurrection, also wanted to preserve the body, from which the dead can be resuscitated, but, they resorted to the preservation, not in the *letter*, but in the *spirit*.

In the Bundeshesh,² we read the following passage :

"At that time (of Resurrection) will be demanded bones from the spirit of the earth, blood from water, hair from plant, and life from fire, as they were accepted by them in the creation."

The spirit (minô), referred to here, is the Yazata presiding over the objects. Spendârmad is the Yazata, presiding over earth, Âbân over water, Amêrêtât over plants, and Âtar over fire. So, what we learn from this para is this : On the death of a man, the different constituents that go to make up the body *viz*, bone, blood, hair and life, pass into the possession, or the spiritual protection of some Yazatas, who are believed to preside over the different objects of Nature with which the elements are believed to mix.

1 Wiedemann's Religion of the ancient Egyptians, pp. 234-35.

2 Chap. XXX 6. S. B. E. Vol. V, pp. 122-23. Vide my Gujarati Bundeshesh, pp. 154-55. Justi's Text p. 72.

Thus, we see, that here also, we have a point of similarity. The Iranians also entrusted some of the constituents of the body—not the four members of the body as among the Egyptians *viz.* the intestines, heart, lung and liver—to four spirits (mino) or Yazatas. But here, the entrusting or dedication, or preservation was not real but ideal, not physical but spiritual, not actual but symbolic. There was nothing like embalming or mummifying the body or its members.

There was, however, one constituent of the body which the ancient Irânians actually and really did preserve in jars or boxes, which are known in the later Pahlavi and Persian books as Astodâns or ossuaries. The Vendidad, enjoins this custom, and the Dadistân-i-Dini speaks at some length about it. For the details of this custom I would refer my readers to my previous papers¹ on the subject.

1. (a) Vide my undermentioned Papers :—

“A Persian coffin, said to be 3000 years old, sent to the Museum of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, by Mr. Malcolm of Bushire” (Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay Vol. I, No. 7, pp. 426-41).

“Quelques observations sur les Ossuaires Rapportées de Perse par M. Dieulafoy et déposées au Musée du Louvre” (L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. Séance du 30 October 1889).

(b) Vide Dr. L. C. Casartelli's Paper on “Astodans and the Avestic Funeral Prescriptions” (The Babylonian and Oriental Record of June 1890, Vol. IV. No. 7).

(c) Vide Mr. K. Enostranzav's Russian Paper on “The Ossuaries and Astodâns of Turkestan”; and, for Mr. Polovtsoff's translation of this paper, my paper entitled “Mr. K. Enostranzav's Paper on the Ossuaries and Astodans of Turkestan, with a few further observations on the Astodan” (Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. VIII, No. 5, pp. 331-42). See also my Asiatic Papers and Anthropological Papers.

The Iranians believed that one Saeshyant, who will appear at the end of the present cycle of time, will raise the dead

from their bones (*Ast*, Lat. *os*). He is therefore called *Astavat Êrêta* i. e. one who makes the possessors of bones rise up. Hence arose the custom of preserving the bones. But the Iranians did not resort to a costly system like that of the Egyptians. It was enjoined that the *Astodâns* need not be very elaborate or costly. They might be prepared of stone, of clay, or even of coarse cloth. These *Astodâns*, which were of the form of cylindrical jars or boxes, were, for further security, placed in underground structures. It was very rare for a person,—for a royal personage like King Cyrus—to have a separate super-structure over his *astodan*.

The modern Zoroastrians have given up the custom of even preserving the bones in separate *astodâns*. Their Towers of Silence contain the *astodâns* or bone-receptacles by themselves.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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The Naojôte Ceremony of the Parsees.

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